Barbara M. Bool.

TRIBAL HERITAGE OF INDIA

Volume I

TRIBAL HERITAGE OF INDIA

An encyclopaedic inventory on the scheduled tribes of India, *Tribal Heritage of India* is a joint project of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, the Indian Council of Social Science Research, and the Anthropological Survey of India.

The series will consist of the following four volumes:

I *Ethnicity, Identity and Interaction*
II *Social Organization and Religion*
III *Tribal Economies and their Transformation*
IV *Tribal India—General Profiles*

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY

TRIBAL HERITAGE OF INDIA

Vol I: Ethnicity, Identity and Interaction

Edited by S C Dube

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Preface

Tribal Heritage of India is the product of a joint project of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, the Indian Council of Social Science Research, and the Anthropological Survey of India. The four volumes in this series are aimed at strengthening the studies of tribal life and culture and also at providing objective and balanced background information for purposive and meaningful planning for tribal development in the country.

A conference of anthropologists, held in New Delhi on 26 and 27 May 1972 under the joint auspices of the Indian Council of Social Science Research and the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, recommended the preparation of a number of studies on the tribal situation based on a comprehensive survey of literature. It identified twenty themes on which studies were to be commissioned. The Indian Council of Social Science Research agreed to underwrite the expenditure involved in the preparation of these studies and invited me to plan and coordinate the entire project as well as to edit the volumes emerging from it. A cell, financed by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, was set up at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study to assist me in this task. In formulating the concept of this encyclopaedic inventory I had the benefit of the advice of the ICSSR Advisory Committee on Scheduled Tribes. This Committee consisted of S. C. Dube, Chairman; B. K. Roy Burman, A. K. Danda, S. N. Dubey, Rekha Olive Dhan, D. N. Majumdar, J. P. Naik, Kartik Oraon, and L. P. Vidyarthi, Members; and Yogesh Atal, Member-Secretary. Later, the Anthropological Survey of India also joined the project as a sponsor and extended active cooperation towards its completion. I had unfailing cooperation and active

support from the three sponsoring agencies in designing the project. They extended to me unreserved academic courtesy in bringing to completion a programme of this magnitude.

The Indian Council of Social Science Research has financed the studies that will go into the volumes of this series. It has also shared the cost of publication. I wish to record my warm thanks to Professor M. S. Gore, Chairman, Indian Council of Social Science Research, for his interest in the project. Mr J. P. Naik, Member-Secretary of the Council, was closely associated with the project at all stages and was sensitive and responsive to its many needs.

The Indian Institute of Advanced Study incorporated the preparation of these volumes in its own academic programmes and readily provided accommodation, secretarial assistance, and research support. I am grateful to Professor S. Nurul Hasan, lately Union Minister of Education and Chairman of the Governing Body of the Institute, for his interest in the scheme.

Dr Kumar Suresh Singh, Director of the Anthropological Survey of India, enthusiastically agreed to participate in the programme. Four contributions, the maps, and many of the photographs going into this series have come from his organization.

Dr B. D. Sharma, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, was also an active participant. Through his efforts we were able to assemble a large number of photographs, some of which have been used in these volumes.

Of course, the project could not have been completed without the cooperation of the contributors who not only worked hard on the themes assigned to them, but patiently attended to the many editorial queries and with equanimity and grace accepted heavy editorial cuts and alterations.

The four volumes in this series, I hope, will present an adequate anthropological appraisal of the major facets of tribal life and of social science research done in respect of them in India.

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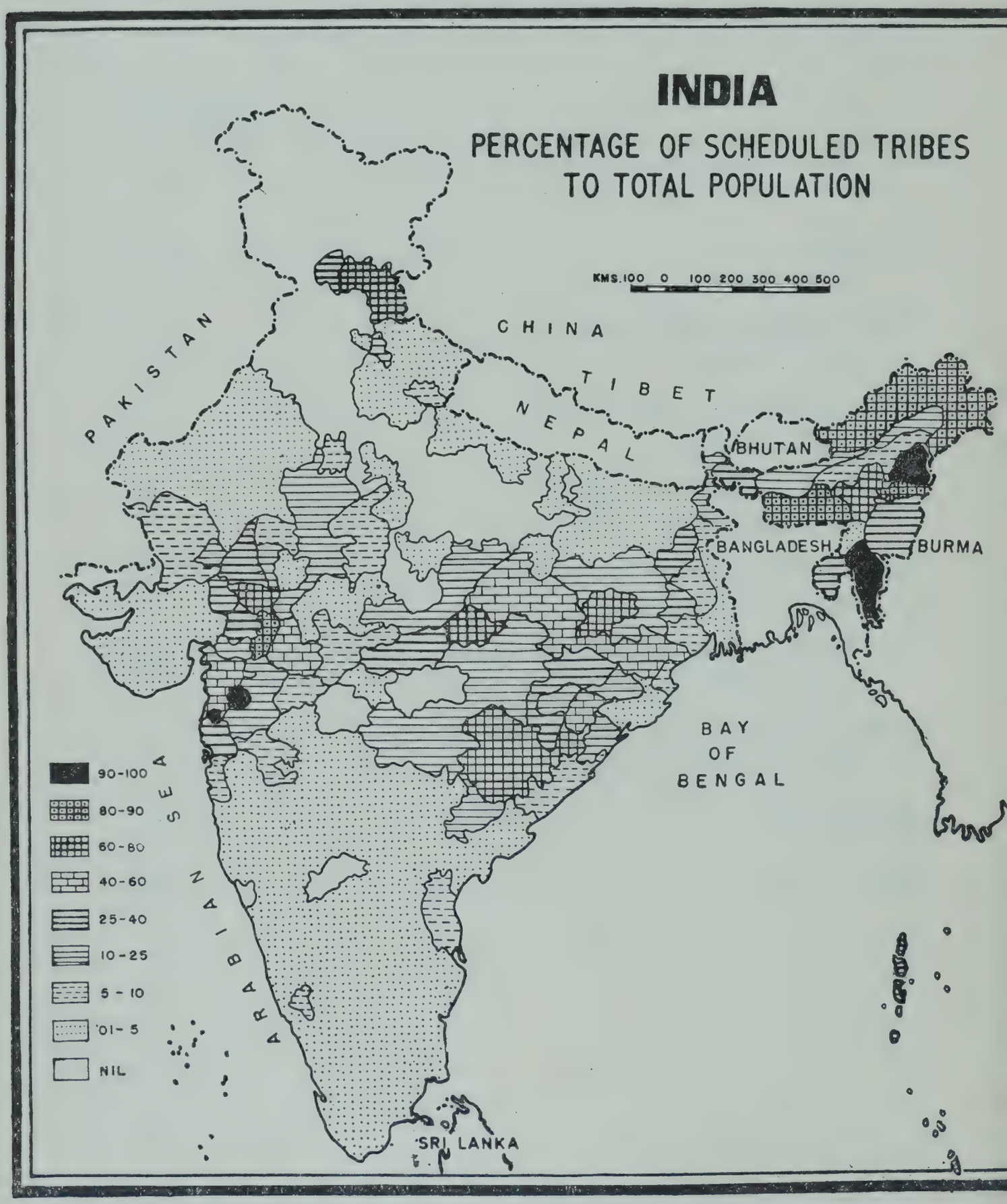


S. C. DUBE

Introduction

THE six essays included in this volume are focused on the theme of ethnicity in the tribes of India, particularly its expression in their corporate self-identity as well as in the patterns of their interaction with other tribal and non-tribal groups. To the first and second generation of ethnographers, who diligently studied tribal life in India before the country had attained national independence, this theme was at best of marginal interest; it could be either ignored or dealt with in a perfunctory manner. Three decades of sustained efforts at nation-building in post-independence India have brought into sharp relief the significance of various forms of ethnicity, for its diverse manifestations have befuddled policy-makers and blocked the emergence of a cohesive and viable nation. Tribal ethnicity has asserted itself in different parts of the country, at different periods of time, with varying degrees of intensity: its articulation, in more extreme cases, has ranged from violent irredentism to hard bargaining, bordering on coercion, for a share in scarce developmental resources. Though the main thrust of the ethnic movements was political in so far as they represented competition for power, their social, cultural, and psychological dimensions were also significant. In intra-tribal terms the directions and trends of change were determined largely by them. In the wider national context, solution of vital questions concerning isolation or assimilation and integration or harmonization was affected by them. The expression and management of ethnicity, in the final analysis, determined the primary, secondary, and terminal loyalties. This order of loyalties had a critical relevance for the conceptual approaches to and operational strategies of nation-building. In the greatly

altered political climate of the country, after the proclamation of emergency in June 1975, ethnicity appears to be struggling to adopt a new idiom but it would be too early to assume that its ideological bases are being eroded or even being diluted significantly. As such, the problem continues to be one of great theoretical and practical interest.

In the Indian context the term tribe has never been defined precisely and satisfactorily. It was used, at one time, to denote a bewildering variety of social categories that were neither analogous nor comparable. The Rajput and the Jat as well as the aboriginals, for example, were categorized as tribes. In later usage it tended to be restricted only to the autochthonous, the aboriginal, and the primitive groups. At no stage, however, did we have a set of clear indicators of tribal-ness. Most popular definitions of the term tended to see in the tribes some, if not all, of the following characteristics:

1) Their roots in the soil date back to a very early period: if they are not the original inhabitants, they are at least some of the oldest inhabitants of the land.

2) They live in the relative isolation of the hills and the forests.

3) Their sense of history is shallow for, among them, the remembered history of five to six generations tends to get merged in mythology.

4) They have a low level of techno-economic development.

5) In terms of their cultural ethos—language, institutions, beliefs, and customs—they stand out from the other sections of the society.

6) If they are not egalitarian, they are at least non-hierarchic and undifferentiated.

At best, these are rough indicators and very few of them can withstand a critical scrutiny. It is difficult to speak of "original" inhabitants, for tribal traditions themselves make repeated mention of the migrations of their ancestors. There is considerable evidence to suggest that several groups were pushed out of the areas where they were first settled and had to seek shelter elsewhere. And there are several groups, now absorbed in Hindu society, which can make an equally tenable claim to being original or, at any rate, very old inhabitants. Geographical isolation does not imply cultural isolation: the Hindu ethos has freely absorbed elements from the older indigenous cultures and, in

its turn, it has in many ways influenced the latter. Not all the tribes have lived in isolation. The four million Gond, the equally numerous Bhil, and the three million Santal were all regionally dominant groups and they can hardly be described as living in isolation. Their habitat had sizable population of other tribal and non-tribal groups. The argument regarding their sense of history is valid, but it is perhaps equally true also of other non-literate groups even though they belong to a great cultural universe. The two other attributes—low level of techno-economic development and distinctive cultural ethos—are found also among groups that are not categorized as tribal. Several tribal communities are undistinguishable from Hindu castes. Finally, are the communities designated as tribal really undifferentiated and non-hierarchic? This may be true of small communities of food-gatherers, shifting cultivators, and primitive artisans and craftsmen, but it is certainly not true of many of the large tribes. Where tribal dynasties ruled, the distinction between the patrician and the plebeian was real. Consider, for example, the great Gond tribe of Chhattisgarh. It is divided into three endogamous groups—the Raj Gond (descendants of the rulers), the Amat Gond (descendants of the local chiefs), and the Dhur (dust) Gond (descendants of the commoners). Where a number of tribal groups live in symbiosis—such as in the Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu and in the Adilabad district of Maharashtra—subtle patterns of stratification and status differential can be discerned. They even observe ritual pollution among one another in a rudimentary form. Thus, the cultural-trait inventory does not take us very far in being able to distinguish between tribes and non-tribes. Yet the distinction continues to be made more than four hundred communities—ranging in size from the four million Gond to the handful of (nineteen) Andamanese—are designated as tribes and 6.9 per cent of the country is classified as tribal.

One cannot dispute this categorization for it is based on a political criterion. According to the constitution of India, certain communities can be included in the schedule of tribes. This administrative action makes each such community a "scheduled tribe" and entitles it to special protection and privileges. Several communities, traditionally believed to be tribal, are included in the schedule, but some have also been left out. On the other hand, some communities which are not conventionally regarded

as tribal also find mention in the schedule. For example, the Muslim inhabitants of Lakshadweep (formerly known as Laccadive, Amindivi and Minicoy islands) and all the native inhabitants of the Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh (who constitute an agglomeration of several Hindu castes that have been lumped together as the Kinnaura) are now classified as scheduled tribes. The list is not final; additions and deletions are still possible.

The long debate over the definition of a tribe having proved sterile, it may be best now to view it as an ethnic category defined by real or putative descent and characterized by a corporate self-identity and a wide range of commonly shared traits of culture. In other words, they believe that they have a common descent, consciously hold a collective self-image, and possess a distinctive cultural ethos, many elements of which are shared by the collectivity. Shared cognitive orientation and perception of belonging together impart a measure of cohesion and unity to the ethnic groups. They often develop individual identities and function as the principal unit of larger group loyalty beyond kin, clan, and residential local group. Racial, religious, and linguistic groups can also acquire ethnic character and it is necessary for us to consider tribal ethnicity alongside the ethnicity of such groups.

Tribal India, as such, did not have a common identity in the past and even today such an identity is not significantly strong. The terms adivasi, girijan, vanyajati, and so forth are of recent origin. Though there are all-India tribal organizations and periodic conferences of the emerging category, using one or the other of these names, they still do not evoke powerful loyalty. Only a fraction of the four hundred-odd scheduled tribes is drawn into such organizations and gatherings. In specific regional contexts, however, there is evidence of tribal identity contributing to the "we" and "they" distinction. "We" includes, first, an individual tribe and, second, also all other tribes of the region. "They," on the other hand, include all non-tribals. Within the cluster of tribes, the "we" category still refers to one's own tribe, but in reference to the total population of the region it is used also as a classification device to distinguish between the tribal and the non-tribal groups. With interest articulation and aggregation, the regional tribal identity becomes powerful; where

interest does not provide the bases of cohesion and action, the identity continues to be feeble. But the identity problem is more complex than it looks at first sight. There are significant "we" and "they" differences among the tribes of a region and they often lead to intense competition and even conflict. A common tribal name—Naga or Gond—does not fully subsume the loyalties of individual groups or sub-groups. A Naga is first an Angami, or a Sema, or a Lhota, or a Konyak, or some other named group. How strong and durable, then, is the "Naga identity"? The same is true of the various groups bearing the generic name Gond. Even some of the smaller tribes—the Kamar, the Saora, and the Khond, for example—have divisions, which for all practical purposes constitute individual tribes. A close examination of the tribal situation would suggest that new tribal identities are still in the process of evolution. As new identities emerge, old ones are obliterated. In the process, old tribal names are discarded and new ones adopted, mythology and tradition are modified and revised, and alternative bases of solidarity-building are discovered to forge wider links with a view to evolving articulate, aggressive, and viable identities.

Tribal ethnicity should be studied both in its expressive and instrumental dimensions. Does a tribe possess a corporate self-identity? What are its sources? Mythology and oral tradition? Shared experience of rulership or subjugation? Or some other factors? How strong is it? Is the consciousness of this identity being strengthened? To what end and how? To what extent does its world view reinforce this self-identity? A tribe must interact with other tribal as well as non-tribal groups because of geographical, economic, and political compulsions. Where does this interaction lead to? Cooperation? Competition? Or co-existence? In what manner are the patterns of interaction stabilized? Do social, religious, and political movements consolidate the existing traditional identities or do they reshape and enlarge them? What is their role in solidarity-building, in goal-setting, and in goal-attainment? Where traditional and emerging political structures coexist, do they tend to pull in contrary directions? What is their impact on pre-existing primary loyalties and the nationally desired terminal loyalties? Extant ethnographies and anthropological analyses, or studies based on them such as those included in this volume, can only

partially answer these questions. They cannot be blamed for this inadequacy, for they were not addressed to these problems. Contemporary anthropological research must accept this challenge and come out with meaningful analyses and imaginative propositions.

After World War II, especially with the emergence of states from the territories of erstwhile empires, a variety of ethnic movements have surfaced and made themselves felt. Their distribution is nearly global. India also has had its quota of such movements. Ethnicity has manifested itself here in many forms: the DK and DMK movements (ethnic-religious-linguistic), the Akali movement (ethnic-religious-linguistic), the Shiva Sena and several comparable movements (regional-linguistic), and the neo-Buddhist movement (ethnic-religious) can be cited as a few examples. The tribes, encapsulated within the larger civilizational universe of India, have added to the number and diversity of such movements. Naga and Mizo aspirations were pitched high, they wanted the creation of sovereign and independent states of their own. Meghalaya was satisfied with statehood within the Indian Union. Jharkhand (Chotanagpur, Bihar) aimed at the same objective, and although it failed to become an autonomus state within the framework of the Indian constitution, it has registered many developmental gains. The tribes of Srikakulam launched a violent struggle against economic exploitation and domination by aliens, that is, those from outside the region. Elsewhere, the expressions of tribal ethnicity were less aggressive. New identities were emerging, but they generally restricted themselves to articulation of their grievances and demands as pressure groups. The conscious formulation of objectives, in some instances, was oriented to bring the tribes closer to the cultural mainstream of the country. The genesis, history, ideology, operational strategy—especially the solidarity-building techniques, mobilization mechanisms, styles of leadership, and so on—and results of these ethnic movements need to be probed in depth. This can be best done in relation to the tribal and cultural policies pursued by the government since independence.

In its handling even of turbulent situations in tribal areas the government has shown admirable restraint, patience, and imagination. With some lapses, its policy has been fairly consistent: understanding, accommodation, and reconciliation have been

its watchwords. While it has been unrelenting in its insistence on maintaining the territorial integrity and sovereignty of India and by implication demanding terminal loyalty to the country, it has shown rare flexibility of approach in meeting legitimate ethnic aspirations. It has consciously tried to stabilize cultural pluralism and to harmonize tribal interests with those of the region and the country. In doing so it has tried to ensure that only the minimum cultural dislocation is caused. For the less articulate tribes a dynamic development plan has been formulated to meet their minimum needs and give them a sense of security and welfare. There still are many areas of doubt and uncertainty, but they are not beyond management. Understanding of the dimensions and ramifications of various forms of tribal ethnicity will be a valuable input towards effective handling of these unresolved dilemmas.

K. N. SAHAY

Tribal Self-Image and Identity

LITTLE work has been done so far on tribal self-image and identity. Most anthropological studies depict tribal life from the researcher's angle and not from the tribal's point of view. A few studies of reference groups and stereotypes of some Indian tribes like the Santal, the Oraon, and the Munda have been attempted, but these are generally psychologically oriented. In the circumstances, we are left only with the choice of reading the relevant literature on Indian tribes and building our profiles of tribal self-image and identity from there.

In this essay we shall consider two related themes—self-image of the tribals (their own ideas, estimations, and concepts about themselves) and identity (the way they identify themselves). The term identity refers to the individuality of a group. At the same time it also implies the way the group associates itself with other phenomena. Thus, the first meaning of this term is not very different from the meaning implicit in self-image. The second connotation, however, goes beyond it and covers the associations and affiliations of the group. In the present review, I propose to use the second meaning of identity.

Tribe Names

A discussion of tribal self-image and identity can start with the etymological meanings of the names of individual tribes or the appellations which the tribes use for themselves. The legends and traditions associated with the names of particular tribes constitute another significant aspect of the study. Analysis of biographical studies, and writings of tribals along with some of

their slogans, will help us further to sketch their self-image and identity. The study will remain incomplete if we do not take note of the factors of change or ignore the forces that have affected their self-image and identity.

In dealing with the etymology of tribe names, it may be noted that several tribes have two sets of names—a popular name by which the tribe is known by its neighbours and a name which the tribe uses to identify itself. Both types of names generally refer to certain characteristics or qualities of a given tribe. There are also some appellations which are resented by the tribes as uncomplimentary.

Elwin (1961) says that although the derivation of the word Naga is obscure, it has been suggested that it means hillman and that it is derived from the Sanskrit word *naga* (a mountain). It is used now as a generic name for a number of groups in Assam and Nagaland. Among the Kachari, Naga means a young man or a warrior. Ptolemy thought that it meant naked. Elwin is of the view that Naga is derived from the word *nok* (people). This is its meaning in some Tibeto-Burman languages such as Garo, Nocto, and Ao. This meaning suggests that the Naga look upon themselves simply as people. While this term has nothing to do with snakes (the Sanskrit meaning of Naga), Elwin quotes Dalton's opinion (1872: 38-39) that "the word is aptly applied, as the Nagas love to decorate, rather than to clothe, their persons, and are decidedly snake-like in their habits." Elwin adds that the word was not in general use among the Naga tribes themselves till recently. It was given to them by the people of the plains and in the last century it was used indiscriminately for the Abor and the Dafla as well as for the Naga themselves. Even as late as 1954, Elwin found the people of Tuensang rarely speaking of themselves as Arleng but as Konyak, Chang, Phom, and so on. In the same way the Mikir usually speak of themselves as Arleng, the Garo as Achikrang (meaning hill people), the Abor as Minyong or Padam.

Gradually, however, as the various tribes of the region became more united, they began to use the name Naga for themselves. Today it is widely accepted. The application of the name appears to be equally confused. Mills (1922) says that Naga is used in "a vague sort of way" and that those who are spoken of as Nagas have something in common with each other which distinguishes

them from the many other tribes found in Assam. Elwin comments that there is a spirit in a Naga which is unmistakable and it is shared by over a dozen tribes of Nagaland (Elwin, 1961: 4-5). Henry Balfour (1926: ix) is of the view that, despite individual tribal traits which differentiate the culture of one group from that of another, the Naga as a whole exhibit a similarity of culture and possess many ideas, habits, and occupations in common.

It would be interesting to analyze the meanings of the names of some tribes who constitute the Naga group. J. P. Mills (1922: 1) says that those who are popularly known as Lhota Naga call themselves Eyon, meaning simply, man. The Lhota Naga tribe is divided into three phratries—"Forehead-clearing men" (*tompyaktserre*), "Scattered men" (*izumontserre*), and "Firesmoke-conquering men" (*mipongsandre*). The appellation "forehead-clearing men" seemingly refers to some habit of hairdressing, while "scattered men" suggests the people of different habits. The third phratry, "firesmoke-conquering men," stands for the men who burnt villages during warfare.

Mills (1926: 1), in his book *The Ao Naga*, says that the appellation Ao is believed to be a current mispronunciation of Aor, their own word for themselves. According to their own statements, *Aor* means "those who came" (across the Dikhu) as distinct from *mirir* (those who did not come), the term used for the Sangtam, the Chang, the Phom, and the Konyak. However, Hutton doubts these explanation of aor and mirir. He regards aor as simply "those who are." Mirir then would mean "those who are not" and the distinction would be equivalent to that of the Chang between *Matmei* (real men) and *Houng* (who are not men at all), or to that of any of the many tribes who call themselves men and their neighbours something else. The more arrogant the distinction between themselves and their neighbours the more would it be in keeping with Ao psychology (Mills, 1926: 2). Barkataki (1969: 74) says that the small Zemi Naga community living in Nagaland calls itself Zeliang. The word Zemi is derived from *Nzieme* meaning "those who live in a hot region."

Another tribe to be mentioned in this context is the Abor, who generally call themselves Padam. *Abor* in Assamese signifies barbarous and independent people. The hill country bordering on Assam, between the Digaru and Dibong rivers, and on both banks of the latter, is occupied by a tribe closely allied to the

Mishi and known as the Chulkata Mishmi by the Assamese because of their habit of cropping the front hair on the forehead (Dalton, 1872: 18). Robinson tells us that the term Dophla is not recognized by the people to whom it is applied, except in their contacts with the inhabitants of the plains. Bangri, the term in their own language to signify a man, is the only designation they give themselves (Dalton, 1872 : 35). In the Chittagong district there live a tribe popularly known as Jumea or Jumea Mug. They are in fact the Mug who are called the Jumea because of their adopting the method of jhum cultivation. In the language of these people, *jhum* means "to burn."

The Garo call themselves Achik-mande. *Achik* means hill; *mande* means man. The Lushei call themselves Mizo. In their name *mi* means man; and *zo* means hill. The Mikir call themselves *Arleng*, which also means man. Some other tribes too describe themselves just as man; *Singhpho* and *Boro* both mean man (Bharkataki, 1969: 16, 50).

Das and Banerjee (1962: 3) say that the name Lepcha has been derived from a Nepali word *Lapcha*, meaning "vile speakers" and a general belief prevails among them that the Gurkha call them Lepcha in contempt. Another version regarding the origin of the term Lepcha is that these people are as submissive as the Lapcha fish. As such the Nepalis termed them Lepcha not in contempt but to give them credit for their submissive temperament. The word Lapcha has been modified to Lepcha in English pronunciation; still the Nepalis refer to them as Lapcha.

The central Indian tribal belt also has a number of tribal names, the etymological meanings of which lead us to the understanding of the self-image of these tribes. The term Kol refers to nearly a dozen tribes like the Munda, the Ho, the Santal and the Bhumij—all speaking a dialect of the Mundari group of languages. Russell and Hiralal (1916: 501-502) say that the word Kol is probably the Santali *har*, meaning a man. This word is used in various forms, such as *har*, *bara*, *ho*, and *koro* by most Munda tribes in order to describe themselves. The change of *r* to *l* in pronunciation is familiar and does not give rise to any difficulty. The word Korku is simply a corruption of *kodaku* (young man) and it can be conjectured that the Hindus, hearing the Kol tribe call themselves *hor* or *horo*, may have corrupted the name to Korku, a form more familiar to themselves. An

alternative derivation from the Sanskrit word *kola* (a pig) appears improbable, but it is possible, as suggested by Grierson, that after the name had been given, its Sanskrit meaning may have added zest to its employment by the Hindus. Amir Hasan (1972: 10) writes that the genesis of the word Kol can be ascribed to many etymological sources; for instance to Korar (a name given to the Munda by the Kharia of Chotanagpur) which closely resembles the word Kol. Again, kola in Sanskrit means a hog and some authorities maintain that it is simply a term of contempt applied by the proud Aryans to the original inhabitants of the country. According to Jellinghause, this term means a "pig killer." The word Kol, according to others, is derived from the Mundari ho, hore, or horo (all meaning man), which, in course of time, assumed different terms as Koro or Kol. Unlike the Munda of Bihar, the Kol of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh call themselves Kol without any objection. As a matter of fact, this is the only name by which they are known. S. C. Roy (1915b: 12) is of the opinion that the term Kol was applied by the Hindus to this tribe as well as to all the people of the Munda race.

Leuva (1963: 3-4) writes that the Asur of Netarhat plateau call themselves so because they consider themselves powerful people and take pride in their ancestors' acts of bravery. The word Asura also occurs in a number of places in the scriptures and has been interpreted to mean "powerful" (*balevan*), "highly intelligent" (*pragnavan*), "destroyer of enemies" (*shatroonam nirasitah*), "giver of life" (*pranasya data*), and so on.

S. C. Roy (1915b: 3-7) says that the Oraon, in their own language, call themselves Kurukh. The term has a close resemblance to the Sanskrit root word *krs* (to plough). The resemblance of the name with *krsak* or *kisan* (ploughman) is too obvious to be ignored. And this similarity of names may not improbably have helped the Oraon in their adoption or retention of the name Kurukh. With this background, when they entered the Chotanagpur plateau centuries ago, these tribes, who associated themselves with the ancient king Korakh, found the country occupied by tribes other than themselves. No wonder, therefore, that the Oraon on their arrival among such peoples should have prided themselves on their superior equipment for the race of life, and assumed or emphasized the distinguishing tribal name of Kuruk-

har or Kurukh. Thus, it appears probable that the Oraon of Chotanagpur came to call themselves Kurikh in the sense of being a tribe of agriculturists. Joel Lakra, himself an Oraon, asserts that the correct name is Uraon not Oraon. He adds that Uraon is a Dravidian term which is made of two words—*ur* meaning village and *awan* meaning inhabitants. To Lakra the tribal name suggests "those who lived in villages."

Russell's collaborator Hira Lal (1916: 446) suggested the derivation of the name Kharia from *khar khar*, a palanquin or litter. He stated that in the Oriya country the Oraon who carry litters are also called Kharia, a contraction of Kharkharia.

To Roy and Roy (1937: 24-25), however, this derivation appears to be far-fetched and not very probable. In Chotanagpur, which is the principal centre of the Dudh Kharia (one of the three sections of the Kharia tribe), these people hold a fairly high position and are not generally employed as palanquin-bearers. For them, it appears more probable that the name Kharia is a variant of the tribal names haro (man) adopted by the Munda, Ho or Hor adopted by the Ho, korku adopted by the Korku or Kurku, and korwa adopted by another branch of what was described as the "Munda race." Against this derivation it may be said that in the Kharia language the word for man is not derived from the root from which the words hor, korwa, and korku are derived. It may be mentioned, however, that although the general Kharia term for man is *lebu*, when man as distinguished from woman (*konseldu*) is meant, the Kharia use the word *nodporu*.

Dalton (1872: 219) says that the Birhor call themselves so because they live in forests and earn their livelihood by cutting *chob* to make ropes for sale. The Kisan (also known as Nagesar in some parts) tribe of Chotanagpur give themselves this name as they have been following the occupation of cultivation from the beginning (Dalton, 1872: 127).

Vidyarthi (1963 : 57-59), writing about the Maler of Santal Pargana, states that the first thing that attracts one's attention is the Maler view about their community. They identify themselves with different names on different occasions. They are *Paharia* (hillmen) because they live in the hills and can be contrasted with the plains people. This geographical grouping naturally includes many other people livig in the hills. But

to outsiders, as also to plains dwellers in general, all tribal groups that inhabit the hills in the Santal Parganas are Paharias. The Maler have their own term for denoting their habitat—they call themselves *Male* which in their native Malto language means hillman. However, this is not used in as broad a sense as the Paharia to include all the hill tribal groups. Maler (plural of Male) is the specific name of a particular tribe living in the Rajmahal hills. The Maler have their own term for the plains dwellers—*guller*. To them the guller (people living in the plains), including the Santal, are rich, treacherous, irreligious, and dishonest. These images get crystallized in the Maler from their childhood and by the time they are adults they begin to mould their inter-group relationships.

Regarding the origin of the name Maler and Sanvaria Paharia there are several views. Bainbridge (1907: 45) is of the view that it has been derived from the Sanskrit word *mal* meaning hardy. Oldham (1810-11) suggests that the name is derived from the common Dravidian term *mala* meaning mountain. However, the Maler themselves indicated that Maler is a Malto term which means hillmen. At another level the Paharia make a distinction among themselves. Some are Maler or Sanvaria Paharia, some are Mal or Manu Paharia, and others are Kumarbhag Paharia. The Maler are usually called Sanvaria by the plains dwellers when they like to distinguish them (Maler) from the other branches of the Paharia. It has been suggested by Bainbridge and Oldham that the name Sanvaria originated from Sanvala Pahar, a name used by the Hindus for the Rajmahal hills. Vidyarthi (1963) supports this view when he says that the Rajmahal hills are composed of black basaltic rock and some people still call it Sanvala hill to indicate its complexion. Thus, it becomes evident that the name Sanvaria may have been given by the local Hindus after the name of the hill.

A study of the Savar tribe published by the Census of India (1961) indicates that the Savar of West Bengal who, according to Cunningham's two reports of 1881-82 are widely spread over central India, derive their name from the habit of carrying an axe (Cunningham, 1969). The Scythian word *sagaris* stands for an axe. According to Cunningham, sagaris has been distorted first into Savari and then into Savar. According to S. N. Roy, however, it has been derived from the verb *roye* (to carry, with

a prefix "saba" which means a dead body or carcass). The word means a carrier of carcasses. This root meaning fits in with the primitive occupation of the tribe, which lived entirely on the spoils of chase. The Savar had the habit of taking the flesh of dead animals, especially those that were thrown outside the villages (S. N. Roy, 1927; Nirmalendu Dutta, 1961: 1).

The Bondo of Orissa call themselves *Remo* meaning men (Elwin, 1950 : 1). Russell and Hira Lal (1916: 464-465), referring to the Khond tribe of Sambalpur and the feudatory states of Patna and Kalahandi say that the tribe calls itself Kuiloka, or Khienju, which may possibly be derived from *Ko* or *Ku*, a Telugu word for mountain.

Shah (1964: 18-19) discusses the etymology of the names of the Gujarat tribes. The Kukans are so called because they migrated to Gujarat from some part of Konkan. The name Dubla is supposed to be a corrupt form of *durbala* or weakling—a name given to them by the Aryan invaders who came into contact with them. Dubla is also interpreted as *durvala* meaning one who is difficult to bend, strong willed, or obstinate. This interpretation, it is claimed, fits the qualities of the people. The word *nayak* (naika) is derived from the Sanskrit word which means a leader or protector. The Naika are said to represent a people with qualities of leadership, who carved out for themselves an independent position of prominence among the tribes and which they have maintained. The term *naikda*, with the diminutive suffix *da*, is used as a term of contempt for those members of the tribes who, while living a nomadic life in hills or forests, were forced to live a life of poverty and laziness with occasional bouts of robbery and raids in search of cattle and food. The name Gamit for that tribe seems to be derived from the Sanskrit word *gram* (a village) and *gramic* (a patel or headman). The term Gamit refers to people settled in villages or to those who occupied the position of patel or headman within a bigger tribe. The word Chodhra seems to be derived from *chowdhary*—a person entrusted with duties of police administration, and the tribe seems to have derived this name because members of the tribe held such or similar positions in the state. The term Dhodia seems to be derived from *dhundi* (meaning a small thatched hut) and *dhundia* meaning a hut dweller. Dhodia also might have connection with Dhulia, a town in west Khandesh, from where they

might have migrated. Dhodia could also have been derived from *dhur* or dust (soil) because the occupation of the tribe is essentially agricultural. The Dhanks are believed to have been defeated in a war and have taken shelter in jungles and fields. Those who took shelter in the fields and fed themselves on *dhan* (uncooked grain) were called Dhanka.

Srivastava (1958: 13-14) refers to the varied etymological interpretations of the name Tharu, who live in the Tarai regions of Nainital. According to one interpretation the name has been derived from *to tahre*, which means "they halted" after their alleged flight in the Tarai forests. Another interpretation is that it is derived from *tarhuwa* which means "became wet," alluding to the swampy nature of the region. Still another interpretation is that the word is derived from *tharthavana*, signifying trembling during their flight from Hastinapur to Tarai after a fierce battle between the Rajputs and the Muslims. Knowles traces the origin of the name Tharu to the word *tharua* in the hill dialect, meaning a paddle. Crooke traces their origin to the word *tharu*, denoting a wine bibber. This name is believed to have been given to the Tharu by one of the Kshatriya rajas, who was amazed at the Tharus' thirst and capacity for liquor. Nesfield, on the other hand, holds the view that the word *thar*, which in the dialect of the lowest class means "a man of the forest," is more correctly applicable to these people because it describes the status of the tribe appropriately.

Russell and Hira Lal (1916), in their work on the tribes of the Central Provinces, tell us about the etymological meaning of tribal names. They say that the word *gadba*, or *gadaba* according to Mitchell, signifies a person who carries loads on his shoulders. These tribals call themselves Guthan. The derivation of the word Gond seems to be uncertain. It is a name given to the tribe by the Hindus or the Muslims for the tribe call themselves Koitur or Koi. Hislop was of the view that the name Gond was a variation of Kond. He pointed out that *k* and *g* are interchangeable. The Khonds call themselves Ky, which Grierson considers to be probably related to the Gond name Koi. He further states that the Telugu people refer to the Khond as Gond or Kod (Kor). It thus seems highly probable that the designation Gond was given to the tribe by the Telugus. The Gond speak a Dravidian language and, therefore, it is likely that they came from the

south into the Central Provinces (Russell and Hira Lal, 1916 : 42-43). There are various Gond groups—Muria, Maria, and others—and it would be interesting to go into the etymology of their names.

Nanjundayya and Iyer (1928) present interesting material on a number of tribes of Mysore. Ares or Kunbi Mahrattas of north Kanara were regarded as a tribe till the twenties of this century. The word *Are* is derived from Arya, meaning noble. The Dombar, essentially a wandering tribe, derive the meaning of the word from a community styled as Domb in northern India. The Hasalaru are a wandering tribe inhabiting the wild regions of western Malnad. They are generally known as Hasalars but they call themselves Agni Honnappana Matadavaru (after their mythical progenitor Honnappa) and Bil Kshatriyas with reference to their custom of carrying bows and arrows whenever they go out for hunting. The word Hasalar is derived from the Kannada word *hasula* (a child, in the sense of a servant). In fact many of the Hasalars are agricultural serfs attached to land and bound to their masters who are expected to support them, to get them married, and to care for when they are ill. This tribe is divided into five subdivisions: Belli Hasalaru or Bellalary who are so called because they are denied entry into the houses of the other divisions and are fed at a distance; the Baggalina Hasalaru got this name on account of their bent legs, which are deformed because they climb areca trees; the Nad Hasalar are so known because they live in *nad* or the plains; the Mal Hasalaru derive their name from their habitation in hilly tracts; and the name Kare Yeleyuva Hasalaru is indicative of the fact that they remove carcasses of dead animals (Nanjundayya and Iyer, 1930: 140, 298).

The Beda, a hunting and agricultural tribe of Karnataka, call themselves by different names which reflect their self-image. They variously describe themselves as *Kanayam Kulam* (descendants of Kannayya); *Dhorikulam* (children of chief); or *Valmiki Kshatriyas*, which indicates their association with sage Valmiki. The words *Gurika* (a marksman) and *Kirata* (a tribe of mountaineers) are applied to them as nicknames. Beda or biyada is believed to be a corruption of the Sanskrit word *Vyadha* meaning a hunter (Nanjundayya and Iyer, 1928: 197).

The Iraliga are a jungle tribe of Karnataka, found also on the

slopes of the Nilgiris. This tribe is known as Iralinga or Iruliga, which are sometimes corrupted into Illigaru. The word Iraliga seems to have been derived from *irul* meaning night. This perhaps has a reference to their dark complexion. Those living in the Bangalore district and its neighbourhood prefer to call themselves Pujari or Kadu Pujari, possibly on account of their worshipping silvan deities (Nanjundayya and Iyer, 1930 : 378).

The Killekyatas are a wandering tribe found scattered all over Karnataka. Kilekya means a mischievous imp; *kille* meaning mischievous, and *kyata* meaning an imp or a crooked person. They earn their living by performing folk plays, dances, and puppet shows. After the usual prayers to Ganapati and Saraswati, they exhibit a doll of fantastic appearance—jet black in colour, with tilted nose, dishevelled hair, flowing beard, protruding lips, potbelly and crooked hands and legs. This figure, known as the Killekyata, is accompanied by its wife Bangarakka, equally hideous in appearance. Both these figures represent the jokers of the performance, and keep the audience amused with crude jests and indecent jokes. The performance itself is known as the play of Killekyota; hence the name has become associated with the tribe. A section of the tribe has given up this profession and taken to fishing. They call themselves Burude Besta (Nanjundayya and Iyer, 1930 : 516).

The Koracha, also known as Korama or Korava, are a tribe of hunters, fortune tellers, cattle-breeders, carriers, basket-makers, and thieves. They are found all over Karnataka. According to Thurston, the name Korcha or Koracha appears to be of a later date than Korava, and is said to be derived from the Hindustani word *kuri* (sly); *korinigga* (sly look) being corrupted into Koracha. But the words Koracha and Korama are otherwise derived from *kuru*, meaning to divine" or "to prognosticate," and are applied to the tribe because of the profession of fortune-telling practised by their women. Another possible derivation suggests the possible association of their tribal name with the Tamil word *kurani* (a hill country) implying that these people are wild hill dwellers. Both the derivations appear to be plausible. In the Telugu districts this tribe is called Yerukula, which comes from the root *eru* or *yerru* which means "to know" or "to divine." People from this tribe who live in towns repudiate the tribal name and call themselves Balija or Korvanji (adapted from Nanjundayya and

Iyer, 1930: 583-584).

Luiz (1962) discusses the etymology of tribal names of Kerala. The names of the Adiyar or Adigal tribe of Cannanore district are said to have been originated from an old rule that they should maintain a distance of *ar adi* (six feet) to avoid causing pollution. The word *adiyan* connotes a slave or vassal attached to a person of standing. The name of the Allar of Palghat, who are wanderers and food-gatherers, is the combination of two Malayalam words—*aal* (people) and *alas* (hollows). It suggests that they are cave dwellers. The name of the Aranadan, who are the inhabitants of Calicut district, is a corruption of Eranadan and denotes that they are a tribe of the Ernad taluk. The name of the Chingathan of Cannanore district, a food-gathering tribe, appears to have originated from a devil dance that they perform during August-September. It is also likely that they are the descendants of the Changatan, who were guards escorting visitors during the Pallava regime and the present name is a corruption. The Eravallan (also Eravallar or Yeravallar), who are the inhabitants of Palghat district, were originally known as Villu Vedan and even now the women of the tribe are called Vedathie, but adult males are known as Mookan. The present name may be a corruption of an early name *eravan* meaning beggar, because some of them subsisted by begging. In the early Dravidian languages eravan refers to agricultural serfs who could be alienated from land. The name of the Irular tribe of Palghat is reported to have originated from their own description of their colour as *irula*, meaning dark.

The Kadar are the inhabitants of Palghat and Trichur districts. Their name suggests that they are *al* (people) of the *kad* (forest). The Kalanady of Calicut district derive their name from Kala Attam, a dance they perform in the enclosures (*kalams*) attached to the households of landlords and temples. According to another version, their name originated from Kalady—their early home in Travancore—and they are degraded Nairs of that place. The Karavazhi are the inhabitants of Kottayam district. They are officially and popularly, but incorrectly, known as Hill Pulayan. The term Pulayan is attached to their name possibly to indicate that they are a polluting community of agricultural serfs. They claim that the name Karavazhi originated from their occupations on *kara* (land) as agricultural labourers. It is

also possible that the name is derived from the combination of the words *vazhi*, meaning route, and *kara* meaning land, to suggest that they came by the land routes. The Karimpalan are the inhabitants of Cannanore and Calicut districts and were originally shifting cultivators. Their name appears to have originated from their occupation of collecting *kari* (charcoal). The latter part of their name is the corruption of *balan* (a person).

The Kattunayakan are the inhabitants of Calicut and Cannanore districts. Their name correctly connotes that they are the *nayakan* (chiefs) of the *kattu* or *kadu*, meaning forest. The alternative names Jenu or Teen refer to honey which they gather. The Kochuvelan of Quilon and Kottayam districts derive their name from *vel*, a spear used by the primitives among them. There is a contention that Velan is the diminutive of Vellala, a tribe that once dominated south India. The Koraga are the inhabitants of Cannanore district; *kora*, the first part of their name refers to the sun, and the name itself may have originated from their tradition of sun worship. There is also a possibility that their name is a corruption of *Koruvar* which, in Tulu, means "the people of the hills."

The Kurichchian (also known as Kurichchan, Kurichiyar, Kowohan, and Kuruchan) are inhabitants of Cannanore and Kozhikode districts. Their name is said to have originated from *Kuruchi*, the name of the day on which they had programmed to hunt or perhaps from *kuri* (external mark) which they make on their chests and foreheads with holy ashes. *Kuru-chian* connotes a good marksman, and being good at shooting the entire group may have come to be known by that name. It could also be the combination of the Kannada words *kuri* (hill) and *chian* (people), to imply people of the hills. It is believed that they were named so by the Cotiote Kerala Varma Raja (alias Pychy Raja) with whose army they were closely associated. The Kurumba live in Kottayam district. Their name is said to have originated from their early occupation of tending *kuru* (sheep). Even now goat-rearing is a popular occupation among a section of them. It is also possible that their name originated from the Tamil word *kurumbo* (mischief), as they were thought to be very arrogant and mischievous.

The name of the Mala Arayan, inhabiting the districts of Kottayam and Ernakulam, indicates a combination of two

words—*arayan* which is the modified form of *arasan*, meaning king, and *mala*, meaning hill. So the name means "king of the hill." The Malakkaran of Calicut district are wanderers in the forest. Their name implies that they are people of the mountains and the alternative name Malamuttanmar indicates that they are the terror of the forest. The Mala Kuravan (also Malakkuravan or Mala Koravan) live in Trivandrum, Quilon, and Kottayam districts. Their name is either the altered form of *Kurru* or *Kuva* or *Kova*, the name of a hill tribe traced back to the 10th century; or it is derived from *kuru*(*koru* or *yeru*)which means "to divine" or "to prognosticate." The name has the root *ko* (*ku*) meaning hill and when the suffix *kar* or *var* (meaning to go) is added the name connotes hill dweller. It is also possible that the name originated from the Malayalam *kurarulla avar* suggesting that they are a people with social disqualifications. The Maha Malasar (Malai Malasars or Mala Malasars) of the Palghat district are in the hunting and food-gathering stage. Their name has originated from the combination of the words *arassan* (king) and *mala* or *malai* (hill). The name, thus, means "king of the forest." The prefix Maha has been added to indicate that they are a superior tribe inhabiting the high mountains. The Mala Pandaram are primitive hunters and food-gatherers. The prefix mala connotes a hill; *pandaram* in colloquial Malayalam suggests a disgusting or hated person. Certain groups of this tribe were notorious for plunder and dacoity. Pandaram also happens to be the name of a container for precious articles, and it is possible that those who enjoyed the possession of forest wealth came to be known by this name. The name Mala Panickkar indicates that they are *panickkars* (workers) in the mala (hills); manual labour happens to be their chief occupation. The Malasar is the generic name for three groups of tribes known as Maha or Malai Malasar, Malacharivan Malasar, and Nattu Malasar. Their name is reported to be indicative of the status they enjoyed as lords or kings (*arasan*) of the hills (mala). Another connotation of the name indicates that they are *alassar* (wanderers) of the mala (hills). The Mala Vedans, also known as Malai Vedan, are found in Kottayam and Quilon districts. Their name suggests their being hunters (*vedan*); hunting was their early occupation. The group which habitually eats rats is called Elijathi Vedan and those who consume crocodiles are known as Chuganni Vedan. The name Mala Vettuvan

indicates that it is a corrupt form of vedan or *vettakaran* and implies that they are hunters. The prefix indicates that they are confined to the mala (mountain). The name Malayadiar (Mala Adiyars) connotes that they are settlers on lands at the *adviaram* (foot) of the mala (mountain). The name Malayalar originated from two Malayalam words mala (mountain) and *alkar* (people) to mean "people of the mountain." The name Malayan connotes that they are *al* (people) of the mala (hills). The name Mannan indicates a corrupt combination of words *mannu* (earth) and *munushian* (man), to mean "sons of the soil."

The name Marati (or Mahratta), associated with the Marathi language, refers, perhaps, to the region from which this tribe came. The Matha are popularly but incorrectly known as Hill Pulaya and Wynadan Pulaya. Their name possibly carries an association with the mother goddess Kali, who is their favourite deity and is known as Matha. Some trace its origin to the matrilineal pattern of succession which they followed. There is also some evidence to indicate that they officiated as priests at the Kallunetti Bhagvati temple in Kurumbala (now known as Padinnavathara Amsom), where the deity is popularly described as *Matha* which in Sanskrit and Malayalam means mother.

The Mavilan are believed to have got their name from a word of Tulu origin, which is associated with a medicinal herb they collect and sell. The name Mudugar is said to have originated from the primitive custom of carrying children on their *muthukus* (backs) which is not the practice with the other tribes living in their area. The prefix of the name Mulla Kuruman, living in Calicut and Cannanore districts, seems to have originated from *mula* (bamboo) which provides them with a substantial part of their livelihood. They cut and sell bamboo or make useful articles with it for sale. It is also likely that it originated from *mulu* (thorn) for they used to live in the midst of thorny shrubs. Mulu also refers to their popular weapon—the arrow—without which these sturdy and well-built mountaineers are seldom seen. There is a possibility that the early feudal lords of Wynad used the term *kuruman* for the working classes as a whole, especially the agricultural labour. Being in the same occupation this tribe also came to be known by that name.

The Muthuwan are an important tribe of Kerala. Their name is said to have an associattion with the fact that they carried their

children, deities, and belongings on their *muduku* (backs) when they migrated into Kerala. They do so even now. The name Nayady is derived from the word *nayattu* (hunt), which was their principal source of living. It may also have been derived from their reputation of being *naya* (dog) eaters. The name Palliyar possibly may have association with the worship of a goddess known as Palichiammal who is very popular among them. Or, it may be a corrupt form of *pallian* meaning "a good tracker." The name Paniyan is the modified form of the Malayalam word *pannikar*, meaning labourer. Their name is also associated with hunting of tigers and panthers with spears and nets. The name Pathiyar is reported to have originated from Pariyari, an early group which practised medicine. The name may also have originated from the fact that they are settled on *pathi* (settled) lands.

Thachanad, the place of their origin, appears to have given the name to the Thachanden. The name combines in it the words *ull* (interior) and *nadu* (country) and suggests that they are the people of the interior. It is also possible that their name originated from the various *adalls* (dances) they perform. The name Urali Kuruman is derived from kuru, an expanded form of *ko* or *ku*, which refers to mountain in the Dravidian languages. *Kuruman* (*kuruba*) probably means mountaineer. It is also possible that the name is associated with the word *kurubu* (mischief), because in the early phase of their history the Kuruman were mischievous and arrogant. They are also dreaded for their black magic. The name Uraly is the combination of the words *ur* (land) and *al* (people), to connote that they are people of the land. They claim that they are aborigines of Arayan origin. The name Urida van Gowdalu originated from *gowa* meaning shepherd. The prefix is said to have originated from a Malayalam nickname Urundu Vannawar or "those who came rolling along," and refers to their migration from Mysore to Kerala. The name Vishavan is associated with *vizha* (trap) made and used by them to catch monkeys. It could also possibly refer to their catching fish by the use of *visham* (poison).

Lastly, it may be noted that the tribals as a whole are acquiring a new identity as *adivasi* (original inhabitant) or *vanyajati* (community living in jungle). There are also certain local terms which reflect their identity in relation to the geographical and ecological

settings in which they live. For the non-adivasis or non-vanyajatis (the non-tribals), they may have a special term. For example, *diku* is used for all foreigners or outsiders in Chotanagpur. Participation in the political processes, especially efforts at solidarity-building, give rise to new identities. The tribes of Chotanagpur and Santal Parganas, for example, are beginning to call themselves Jharkhandi (dwellers of Jharkhand). Jharkhand is the name of the contiguous area of tribal concentration in Chotanagpur, Santal Parganas, Orissa, West Bengal, and Madhya Pradesh taken together. Jharkhandi stands for the tribals living in the forest areas of south Bihar, irrespective of ethnic distinctions. This is a new political label to distinguish between the original inhabitants from later immigrants.

The foregoing discussion of the etymology of tribe names from various parts of India reflects partly the images they have of themselves and partly those that others have of them. It is significant that in certain tribes they derive more than one etymological meaning of their tribe name/names. The different names are perhaps acceptable to the different sections of the same tribe. However, all are relevant for understanding their self-image.

A number of tribes such as the various Naga and Kol groups, the Garo, the Dophla, the Maler, the Birhor, the Bondo, the Kuiloka, the Maria, the Koracha, the Kadar, the Kurichchian, the Arayan, the Allar Malakkaran, the Mala Kuravans, the Maha Malasar, the Mala Panickkars, and the Malayalar Kattunayakan have given themselves names that just mean man or "human beings." Some call themselves "hill men," "men of the forest," "king of the forest," "walkers in the forest", or "cave dwellers." What strikes us here is that they consider themseves a part of their ecological setting.

Some tribal groups like the Tharu and the Kurichchian have an image of a glorious past. They consider themselves related or at least in some way associated with important ruling dynasties.

The names of several tribes like the Kurukh, the Kisan, the Kharia, the Savar, the Bhil, the Dhodihia, the Gadaba, the Kaikari, the Koli, the Hasalar, the Killekyata, the Koracha, the Eravallan, the Karavazhi, the Karimpalan, the Kurumbas, the Beda, the Mavilan, the Mala Pandram, the Mulla Kuruman, the Nayady, and the Vishavan indicate the type of economy or

occupations with which they are associated.

In another group of tribes certain physical and social characteristics or other attributes have become associated with their names. The names of the three Lhota Naga phratries, the Chulkata Mishmi Lepcha, the Dubla, the Nayal, the Tharus, the Baggaling Hasalaru, the Iraliga, the Killekya, the Kochu Velan, the Kurichchian, and the Palliyar may be mentioned in this connection.

There are some tribes which take pride in the fact that they have been the worshippers of particular deities or their ancestors were somehow associated with them. This finds reflection in their tribe names. The names of tribes like the Malhar, the Pujari, the Marati, the Palliyar, and the Koraga may be mentioned in this context.

Some of the tribes are believed to have come from a particular region or through a particular route. These have got associated with their names. The Kukan, the Tharu, the Dholia, the Kalanady, and the Karavazhi may be mentioned in this connection.

The tribe names of the Muria (Gond) and the Mannan reflect the peoples' consciousness of the fact that they are aboriginal or "sons of the soil." The Surajbansi Koli call themselves by this name as they consider themselves to be the descendants of the sun and claim a Rajput status, while the Beda regard themselves to be the "children of Valmiki Kshatriya" and associate themselves with the sage Valmiki.

Some names indicate the consciousness among the members of the tribe of the privileged social positions which they held or now hold.

Legends Associated with Tribe Names

A number of tribes have legends and traditions to explain their origin. These legends and traditions either attribute their origin to some supernatural circumstances or derive it from supernatural or mythological characters. Some of them refer to the tribe's affiliation or association with royal personages and speak of its glorious past.

The legends of the Ao Naga (Mills, 1926 : 6-7) suggest that the ancestors of the tribe came out of the earth at Lungterok "six

stones," sometimes also called Ungterok. This place lies on the top of a spur on the right bank of Dikhu river opposite Mokongtsu. Out of the famous six stones, from which the Ao derive their origin, only three are standing and they are believed to be male and female stones.

The Angami Naga trace their origin (Hutton, 1921a) from a spirit dwelling in the sky. Another legend of origin, apparently of the Kepepfuma division of the tribe, says that the Memi Angami came from the daughter of a local god at Mekrima (Maikel) who was impregnated by a cloud that came from the south. Another Angami tradition points to a village in the Tangkhul country, known to them as Piwhema, as the place of their origin. A more common legend traces the two divisions of the Angami tribe, the Kepezoma and the Kepepiuma, to two brothers who emerged from the bowels of the earth at Mekrima just as the ancestors of the Ao tribe emerged at "six stones" on Chongliemdi hill.

The Lhota Naga (J. P. Mills, 1922 : 3-4) believe that they are the descendants of three brothers—Limhachan, Izumontse, and Rankhanda—from whom the three phraties of the tribe are derived. They came out of a hole in the earth near the miraculous stone at Kezakenoma. A load of rice left to dry on this stone, they believed, became two loads. Because of the bad behaviour of a man from the tribe the stone lost this miraculous power. The Lhota set out on their migrations, taking with them a little piece of the stone which is still preserved at Pangti.

The Lakher, who are known also as the Mara, have the following tradition:

> Long ago, before the great darkness called Khazanghra fell upon the world, all men came out of a hole below the earth. As the members of each Mara group came out of the earth [they] called out [their] name. [Each] Tlongsai called out, 'I am Tlongsai'; Zeuhnang called out, 'I am Zeuhnang'; Hawthai called out, 'I am Hawthai'; Sebeu called out, 'I am Sabeu'; Heima called out, 'I am Heima'. Accordingly, god thought that a very large number of Maras had come out and stopped the way. When the Lushei came out of the hole, however, only the first one to come out called out, 'I am Lushei', and all the rest came out silently. God only hearing one man

> announce his arrival, thought that only one Lushei had come out, and gave them a much longer time, during which Lusheis were pouring out of the hole silently in great numbers. It is for this reason that Lusheis to this day are more numerous than Maras (Parry, 1932 : 4).

A similar story is said to be current among the Khyeng:

> All Naga Tribes also have legends of clans descended from indigenous women out of caves or wild men caught in the jungle and tamed, whose descendants are now no longer distinguishable except by this tradition from the rest of the tribe. Thus there are many Lhota clans usually described as descended from jungle 'spirits' captured by men of their tribe; the Phoms have a clan descended from a woman with a child who emerged from a cave when they occupied the country; the Angamis of Kohima have a clan descended from a far-distant ancestor 'of the wood-cutting generation' who was caught in the forest and tamed by one of the earliest Angami occupants of Kohima village (J. P. Mills, 1922 : XXI).

Dalton (1872) has recorded several legends and traditions about the origin of the north eastern tribes. The Singphos "were originally created and established on a plateau called Majai-Singra-Bhum, situated at a distance of two months' journey from Sadiya, washed by a river flowing in a southerly direction to the Irrawaddy. During their sojourn there they were immortal and held celestial intercourse with the plants and all heavenly intelligences, following the pure worship of one Supreme Being. Why they left this Eden is not stated; but they have another tradition in which the fall is assigned to an act of disobedience on their part in bathing in interdicted water. On descending to the plains they became mortal, and having imbrued their hands in the blood of men and animals in self-defence and for subsistence, they soon adopted the idolatries and superstitions of the nations around them" (Dalton, 1872 : 17).

> The Padam (Abor) have the following legend of origin: The human family aer all descended from one common mother. She had two sons, the elder was a bold hunter, the younger was

a cunning craftsman; the latter was the mother's favourite. With him she migrated to the west, taking with her all the household utensils, arms, implements of agriculture and instruments of all sorts, so that the art of making most of them was lost in the land she deserted; but before quitting the old country she taught her first born son how to forge *daos*, to make musical instruments from the gourd, and she left him in possession of a great store of blue and white beads. These beads and the simple arts known to him he transmitted to his posterity the Padam, and from him they received the injunction to mark themselves on the forehead with a cross. The western nations, including the English, are descended from the younger brother, and inherited from him and continued with the instructions of the mother their knowledge of science and art (Dalton, 1872 : 30).

About the Manipuri Dalton says:

In their own country they appear to oscillate between the wild paganism, unsophisticated manners, and savage customs of their hill cousins, and a desire to be esteemed worthy of the beautiful visionary history which the Indian epics have been so kind as to assign to them. Manipur was one of the most favoured of the regions visited by. . .Arjun during his self-imposed punishment of twelve years wandering in exile. He remained sometime in the beautiful valley, and espoused the daughter of the king and another maiden; and again in the wake of the sacrificial horse, he re-entered Manipur and found it flourishing wonderfully under the dominion of his son by the Manipur princess. . . . (Dalton, 1872 : 54).

Let us turn to the central Indian tribal belt. Dalton refers to a tradition of the Ho concerning the creation of the world and the origin of the human race. It explains the origin of the Kol tribes as follows:

Ote Boram and Sing Bonga (Supreme Being) made the earth with rocks and water, and they clothed it with grace and trees, and then created animals, first those that man domesticates, and, afterwards wild beasts. When all was thus prepared for the abode of man, a boy and girl were created, and Sing Bonga

placed them in a cave at the bottom of a great ravine and finding them to be too innocent to give hope of progeny, he instructed them in the art of making *Illi*, rice beer, which excites the passions and thus the world became peopled (Dalton, 1872 :183-184).

The Ho also have a legend regarding the origin of different tribes:

> When the first parent had produced twelve boys and twelve girls, Sing Bonga prepared a feast of the flesh of buffaloes, bullocks, goats, sheep, pigs, fowls, and vegetables, and making the brothers and sisters pair off, told each pair to take what they most relished and depart. Then the first and second pair took bullocks and buffaloes' flesh, and they originated the Kols (Hos) and the Bhumij (Matkum); the next took of the vegetables only, and are the progenitors of the Brahmans and Chatris; others took goat and fish, and from them are Sudras. One pair took the shell fish and became Bhuiyas; two pairs took pigs and became Santals. One pair got nothing, seeing which, the first pairs gave them of their superfluity, and from the pair thus provided, spring Ghasis who toil not, but live by preying on others. The Hos have now assigned to the English the honour of descent from one of the first two pairs, the elder. The only incident in the above tradition that reminds one of the more highly elaborated Santal account is the divine authority for the use of strong drinks (Dalton, 1872 : 184).

Besides this legend which accounts for the origin of several different tribes, there are legends to explain the origin of individual tribes also. S. C. Roy has narrated the following legend of the Munda:

> In the beginning of time, the face of the earth was covered over with water. *Sing Bonga*, the Sun God, brooded over the waters and the first beings that were born were a *Kachua* or tortoise, a *Karakom* or crab, and a *Lendad* or leech. *Sing-Bonga* commanded these first-born of all animals to bring Him a lump of clay (hasa) from out of the depths of the primeval ocean. The tortoise and the crab by turns tried their skill, but

in vain. The persistent leech, however, met with better success. It succeeded in fishing out a bit of clay from underneath the deep. And with this clay, *Sing-Bonga* made this *Ote-Disum*, this beautiful earth of ours. And, at His bidding, the Earth brought forth trees and plants, herbs and creepers, of manifold varieties. *Sing-Bonga* next filled the earth with birds and beasts of all sorts and sizes. And now happened the most memorable incident of all. The bird *Hur* or swan laid an egg. And out of this egg came forth a boy and a girl, the first human beings. These were the progenitors of the *Horo-Honko*—the sons of men, as the Mundas still style themselves. The first human pair, however, were innocent of the relation of sexes. So, *Sing-Bonga* pointed out to them certain vegetable roots and taught them the secret of making *ili* or rice-beer therewith. And the first pair, since remembered as *Tota-Haram* and *Toti Buri* (the naked male ancestor and the naked female ancestor) brewed *ili* as directed, and drank their fill. And the *ili* tasted very sweet and it inflamed their passions. And in due course they were blessed with offsprings. Three sons were born to them, one after another. And these were named respectively Munda, Nanka, and Rora. All this happened at a place named Ajam-Garh. On their parents' death, the sons wandered about over the face of the earth—over hills and dales, through forests untrodden by the feet of man and over fields unworn by plough (S. C. Roy, 1912 : 328-329).

S. C. Roy narrates another interesting legend which deals with the origin of the Oraon:

...a Muni or ascetic... sat absorbed in divine contemplation in the heart of a dense forest. Day after day, month after month, and year after year, the ascetic remained seated in the same posture on the self-same spot, without food, drink, or sleep, till at length his body got rooted to the ground, and was covered over with an ant-hill. Round the ant-hill grew up a thorny creeper, a long thorn from which actually entered his chest. At length it so happened that a wood-cutter who had been to the jungle to cut wood, mistook the ascetic for the ant-hill covered stump of a tree. And against this supposed stump he struck the butt-end of his axe to shake off the ant-

hill. But to his astonishment, the wood-cutter soon discovered it was a living man. The ascetic, thus rudely disturbed in his meditations, got up on his legs. As he stood up, the thorn sticking into his chest got broken, and blood began to ooze out of his chest. The ascetic, not willing to allow a drop of his own blood to stain Mother-Earth, took all the blood in the folded palms of his hands. As however, he had now to satisfy a call of nature, he put the blood in a cup improvised for the purpose out of a *Korkota* leaf, and placed the cup in a shady place close by. When the ascetic was about to leave the place out of the blood there came into life a boy and a girl (called in the story *Bhaiya-Bhayin* or brother-sister). And they called out to the ascetic and said, 'stop, pray, stop. It is you who brought us into the world. And now if you leave us here, what shall we do to get a living?' The ascetic replied, 'you shall be cultivators. Clear this jungle, and make agriculture your occupation. Your granary will be full of grains. And when people of different castes will approach you for alms, give a handful of grain to every supplicant'. Thus, they, the *Bhaiya-Bhayin*, the first parents of the Oraons, having been born of the blood of the chest (Sanskrit, *Uras* or *Ur*) of the holy ascetic, their descendants came to be known as *Uragon Thakur* or *Uraons*. And in those olden days they were quite as respectable as the Brahmans, and wore the sacred thread. When, later, the Oraons fell from their high state, and began to eat indiscriminately whatever food, clean or unclean, that came to hand, they forfeited their claims to the name of *Uragon Thakurs*, and came to be called Oraons (S. C. Roy, 1915 : 14-17).

S. C. Roy comments that this story narrated by the Oraon is complimentary to themselves because it gives them a respectable ancestry and an honourable occupation. He (1915a : 3-7) says further that the Oraon, in their own language, call themselves Kurukhs. The origin of this name is sometimes traced to one of their mythical hero kings. Tradition ascribes the origin of the ancient territorial name Karus-des to this personage. Karus-des roughly comprised what is now the district of Sahabad, a former home of the Oraon.

Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal records the following legend

connected with the origin of the Santal:

> A wild goose coming from the great ocean alighted at Ahiri Pipri, and... laid two eggs. From these two eggs a male and female were produced, who were the parents of the Santal race. From Ahiri Pipri our progenitors migrated to Hara Duttie, and there they greatly increased and multiplied, and were called Kharwars. Thence they removed to Khairagarh and Hurredgarhi, and eventually settled in...the Hazaribagh district, where they remained for several generations. ...(Dalton, 1872: 209-210).

Russell and Hira Lal in their book *The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India* say:

> The Kharia legend of origin resembles that of the Mundas, and tends to show that they are an elder branch of that tribe. They say that a child was born to a woman in the jungle, and she left it to fetch a basket in which to carry it home. On her return she saw a Cobra spreading its hood over the child to protect it from the Sun. On this account the child was called *Nagvansi* (of the race of the Cobra) and became the ancestor of the Nagvansi Rajas of Chotanagpur. The Kharias say this child had an elder brother, and the two brothers set out on a journey, the younger riding a horse and the elder carrying a *Kawar* or *banghy* with their luggage. When they came to Chotanagpur, the younger was made king, on which the elder brother asked for a share of inheritance. The people then put two caskets before him and asked to choose one. One of the caskets contained silver and the other only some earth. The elder brother chose that which contained earth, and on this he was told that the fate of himself and his descendants would be to till the soil, and carry banghys as he had been doing. The Kharias say that they are descended from the elder brother while the younger was the ancestor of the Nagvansi Rajas, who are really Mundas (Russell and Hira Lal, 1916: 445-446).

The Birhor legend says that they and the Kharwar are of the same race and descended from the sun. Originally seven brothers came to Hazaribagh from Khaira-garh (in the Kaimur hills)

of which four went to the east, and three brothers remained in Ramgarh district. One day when the three brothers were going out to fight against the chiefs of the country, the headgear of one became entangled in a tree. He deemed it a bad omen and remained behind in the jungle. His two brothers went without him and gained victory over the chiefs, and on returning found their brother employed in cutting the bark of the *chob*. In derision they called him a *Bihor* (a Munda word for a woodman or a man from the forest or *chob* cutter). He replied that he would rather remain a Bihor and reign in the jungles than associate with such haughty brothers. Thus originated the Brihor, lords of the jungles. The other two brothers became rajas of the country called Ramgarh (Dalton, 1872 : 218).

The following legend has been recorded for the Hill Korwa:

> [They] are the most savage-looking of all the Kolarian tribes. They are frightfully wild and uncouth in their appearance, and have good-humouredly accepted the following singular tradition to account for it. . . . The first human beings that settled in Sirguja being very much troubled by the depredations of wild beasts on their crops, put up scarecrows in their fields, figures made of bamboos dangling in the air, the most hideous caricature of humanity that they could devise to frighten the animals. When the spirit saw the scarecrow, he hit on an expedient to save his votaries the trouble of reconstructing them. He animated the dangling figures, thus bringing into existence creatures ugly enough to frighten all the birds and beasts in creation, and they were the ancestors of the wild Korwas (Russell and Hira Lal, 1916 : 572).

The Muasi of the former Korea and Chand Bhakhar states in Madhya Pradesh have a legend of origin which takes us to the serpent race. It says :

> Sometime after the creation of the world, there issued from the earth a male and female, Naga Bhuiya and Naga Bhuiain, that is, evidently the earth serpent and his wife. They had power over and worshipped nine demons whose names as pronounced by the Muasis are given below. They are apparently all taken from the Hindu mythology. The first, called Barhona,

is no doubt Varuna, the spirit of the waters; the second Andhiar, the spirit of darkness; the third, Rakas (Raksh-asas), the demons of the forest; the fourth Chitawar... the fifth, Pat, the spirit of the mountain; sixth, Danu, are Danawas, the sons of Danu described in the Puranas as Asuras, enemies of the gods and subordinates of the great serpent king Kasuki (Basuki?); seventh, Bhainsasur, the buffalo demon; eighth, Agin, probably for Agni, the fire demon; and ninth, Kolara, not found in the sacred books, perhaps a special Kol demon. The Naga and his wife, after living many years on the earth's surface, had a son which was apparently what they had been waiting for, as on the birth of the child they wrapped it in a sheet, left it under a Mahwa tree and disappeared. The child was found and taken to the Raja of Kanauj, who gave it the name Mahawasi and adopted it. The boy grew up and marrying became the father of two sons, and the Raja gave them the country called Ganjar. This they held for many years, paying tribute to the Kanauj ruler, but they increased and multiplied and grew proud, and refusing to pay the accustomed tribute, the Raja gave their country to two warriors from Kalinjar, named Apla and Adal. They made war on the Muasis, subjugated them, and brought the leaders bound before the king, who caused a loaded banghy to be laid across the shoulders of each, and pronounced sentence that they and their descendants were thenceforth for ever to bear burdens (Dalton, 1872 : 230).

The Maler of Rajmahal hills narrate the following tradition of their origin:

Seven brothers were sent from Heaven to people the earth, the eldest fell sick whilst the remainder were preparing a great feast. It was arranged that each was to take of the food that he preferred and go to the place he had chosen to live in. One took goat's flesh and went to a distant country, and his progeny are Hindus; another, from whom the Musalmans are descended, took flesh of all kinds except pork. It is not stated what the third took, but he originated the Kharwars. The fourth took hog's flesh, went north, and from him sprang the Kiratis; a fifth became the ancestor of the Kawdir (Koda, Kora, Kola, tank-digging Kols). The sixth took food of all

kinds and went far away, and it was not known what had become of him till the English appeared, when it was at once concluded that they were the descendants of the omnivorous brother. The seventh brother was named Malair; he was the eldest who was sick; they gave him all kinds of food in an old dish, thus he became an outcaste, and was left in the hills, where finding neither clothes nor means of subsistence, he and his people necessarily became thieves, and continued in that vocation till taught better by Mr Cleveland (Dalton, 1872 : 255-256).

Vidyarthi refers to a different tradition which gives them the consciousness of being Maler.

The study of their folktales and folk-songs tells them about the glorious history of the Maler and their kings. Their legends from the very childhood make them aware that they are distributed on all the hills of Rajmahal Plateau and in the past were the exclusive owners of this land. In their verbalized statements the Maler remember about the Pahariya forts, the names of the local Pahariya kings and their fabulous wealth and the royal documents (*Tamra Patra*) which refer to their rich heritage. The Maler refer to the mysterious fort at Kachna Surajbera near Litipara to be the abode of their royal army and Kings. This fort, occupying a magnificent site on the top of the hill extending over two square miles in area is really a living symbol of the Maler glory. It still reminds them of their rich royal heritage (Vidyarthi, 1963 : 59-60).

Dalton (1872 : 282), referring to the legend of the origin of the Gond, says that twelve families of Gonds are believed to have sprung from a boil on the hand of Kalia Adao, who was similarly produced from the hand of Mahadeva. These Gonds filled the hills and valleys, and were distinguished by their promiscuous appetites and high odour.

Forbes narrates a popular version of the history of the origin of the Chero tribe of Chotanagpur :

Kesho Naraian Singh, a Bohndya Rajput and Rajah of Ghurgoomtee, in Bhundelkhund, was blessed with an only

daughter. Being anxious to learn the future that was in store for her, he sent for a learned Brahmin and requested him to draw up her horoscope. The Brahmin did so, and declared that it was ordained that the young girl, if married at all, could wed none other than a *muni* or one to all intents and purposes dead. On learning this the Rajah determined to go to some holy shrine and offer (Shunkulp) his daughter to the first *muni* he could find. He started accordingly, taking his daughter with him. When passing through the Morang country, he one day encamped in a grove of trees, near it was a *teela* or mount. Inquiring of the people what this *teela* was, he learned that it was the living Sepulchre of a very pious *muni*, or as it is written in the original 'Chummun Munrikh'. Here was good news. The Raja immediately called for spade and shovel and soon unearthed the holy man, who was discovered in the act of praying. Feeling convinced that he saw before him his daughter's future lord, as predicted by the Brahmin, the Rajah at once offered her to the holy man in marriage and started off delighted for his own country. Taking no notice of the intrusion on his solitude and this sudden accession to his worldly goods the holy *muni* remained wrapped in prayer for sometime after the departure of the Raja. When his thoughts actually reverted to things terrestrial he condescended to address the young lady, asking her several pertinent questions as to who she was, whence she had come, doubtless not foregetting particulars as to her dowry, and was so extremely satisfied with her replies that, forgetting all his vows, he married her without further ceremony. From this marriage sprung the Cheros or the Chouhanbansi Rajputs and children of the moon (Forbes quoted in Narmadeshwar Prasad, 1961 : 182-183).

The descendants of these Chero were said to have ruled at Kumaon and Bhojpur for several generations.

Roy and Roy narrate a legend which explains the origin of the Hill Kharia of the former Mayurbhanj state.

God created first the sky and the earth and then a pea-fowl. The bird laid an egg. The egg burst. And from the shell of the egg issued the first Kharia, from the white of the egg the first Purana (now a Hinduised caste of Mayurbhanj, probably a

section of the Bhuiya with whom Risley identifies them), and from the yellow of the egg the ancestor of the ruling Bhanja family of Mayurbhanj. This is said to have happened at a place called Aditpur in the present Panchpir Subdivision of the State; and the first ancestor of the Kharias is said to have been named Adi Kharia. It is interesting to note that, according to the tradition of the Mayurbhanj Raj family, Adi Singh (Bhanja) was the name of the first Bhanja of the Mayurbhanj State (Roy and Roy, 1937 : 26-28).

The Kharia of the Simlipal hills claim to be the descendants of Basu Savara, who is represented in Hindu tradition as a devotee of Krishna. The tradition goes that a Brahman named Vidyapati, whom Raja Indra Dyumna (King of Mahwa) had sent out in search of god Vishnu or Krishna, found Basu Savara secretly worshipping the deity in the jungle of Nilachala (on the site on which the present temple of Jagannatha at Puri stands) in the form of an image made of blue stone. This Brahman, who won the confidence of Basu Savara, became enamoured of his daughter and married her.

Some Kharia families of Mayurbhanj, who have acquired the title of *Pata-bandha* because they enjoy the privilege of placing a silk cloth (*pata*) over the *ratha* or chariot of Jagannatha on the occasion of the Ratha Yatra (car festival) celebrated by the ruler of Mayurbhanj at his capital, also call themselves Brahmna Kharia.

A section of the Kharia have another legend regarding the origin of the tribes of this region. They say, the first Bhanja came out of the yolk of the egg of a peahen, from its white came out the ancestor of the Purana, from the membrane (*uri*) sprang the ancestor of the Oraon, and from the shell sprang the first ancestor of the Kharia. This is why the Kharia do not kill the peafowl nor eat its meat.

Nevill (1904 : 107) narrates a story to justify the claim of royal descent which the Tharu make. Once upon a time, in the remote past, the kings of these parts were defeated by an invader. Rather than fall into the hands of the enemy, the women of the royal family fled into the jungles with the *sais* (those who looked after the horses) and the *chamar* (cobblers) belonging to the palace. From them sprang the two indigenous races of the Tharu and the

Bhukaa, the former are said to have descended from the chamars and the latter from the sais.

Shah (1964 : 22) narrates a legend about the origin of the Dhanka tribe of Gujarat. According to popular belief, the Tadvi were the original inhabitants of Pavagarh and they were Chohan Rajputs. At the time of Patai Raja of Pavagarh they were living in the Pavagarh area. It is said that Patai Raja was a devotee of goddess Amba. When the goddess was pleased by his deep devotion, she offered to grant his wish. The king asked her to become his wife. The goddess was so enraged with this demand that she cursed him. He, his kingdom, and his relatives were to perish. When Muhammad Begda, the emperor of Ahmedabad, invaded Pavagarh, the Patai Raja fought bravely, but he was killed on the battlefield. His soldiers fled and took shelter in the jungle. The city of Champaner and the neighbouring areas lost their prosperity; the population fled to the neighbouring fields and forests. Those who took shelter in the fields and fed themselves on *dhan* (uncooked grain), were called Dhanka. Some of them came and settled on the banks of the Narmada. The Gujarati and Sanskrit word for riverbank is *tat*; those living on riverbanks or in villages near the river were called Tatvis, a word which came to be softened into Tadvi.

Russell and Hira Lal (1916) mention several such legends associated with the origin of a number of tribes in what was then known as the Central Provinces of India. The Kanwar constitute a primitive tribe living in the hills of the Chhattisgarh region, north of Mahanadi river. These people trace their origin from the Kauravas of the Mahabharata, the section defeated by the Pandavas at the great battle of Hastinapur. It is believed that only two pregnant women survived and fled to the hills of central India, where they took refuge in the houses of a *rawat* (grazier) and a *dhobi* (washerman) respectively. The boy and the girl born to them became the ancestors of the Kanwar tribe (Russell and Hira Lal, 1916: 389).

The Khairawar of Chotanagpur assert that their original seat was the fort of Rohtas. It has been so named because it was the abode of Rohitashwa, son of the legendary Raja Harishchandra. From this ancient house they also claim descent and call themselves Surajvansis. Harishchandra was a lineal descendant of the sun. A less flattering tradition regards them as the offspring of a

union between a Kshatriya man and a Bhar woman, contracted in the days of King Ben, who had abolished the distinctions of caste. A somewhat similar story is told by the members of the tribe in Bamra state. Here they say that their original ancestors were the sun and a daughter of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. She lived in the town of Sara. She was very beautiful. The sun desired her and began blowing a conch to express his passion. While the girl was gaping at the sight and sound, a drop of spittle fell into her mouth and impregnated her. Subsequently, a son was born from her arm and a daughter from her thigh—Bhujbalrai and Jonghrai. Bhujbalrai was given great strength by the Sun, and he fought to become the king of Rathgarh. But in consequence of this he and his family grew proud, and Lakshmi decided to test whether they were worthy of the riches she had bestowed upon them. She came in the guise of a beggar to their door, but was driven away without any alms. She cursed them. In consequence, their descendants—the Khairwar—are always poor and eke out a scanty subsistence from the forests (adapted from Russell and Hira Lal, 1916: 429).

The Khond of Sambalpur and the adjoining states have a tradition regarding their origin which may be of little historical value, but they were almost certainly at one time the rulers of the region in which they now live. It was the custom until recently for the raja of Kalahandi to sit on the lap of a Khond on his accession while he received the oaths of fealty. The man who held the raja was the eldest member of a particular family, residing in the village of Gugsai Patna, and had the title of Patnaji. The coronation of a new raja took place in this village, to which all the chiefs repaired. The Patnaji would be seated on a large rock, richly dressed, with a cloth over his knees on which the raja sat. The diwan then tied the turban of state on the raja's head, while all the other chiefs present held the ends of the cloth. The ceremony fell into abeyance when Raghu Kesari Deo was made raja on the deposition of his predecessor for misconduct, as the Patanji refused to install a second raja, while one previously consecrated by him was still living. The raja was also accustomed to marry a Khond girl as one of his wives, though latterly he did not allow her to live in the palace. These customs have lately been abandoned; they may probably be interpreted as a recognition that the rajas of Kalahandi derived their rights from the

Khonds. Many of the zamindari estates of Kalahandi and Sonpur are still held by members of the tribe (adapted from Russell and Hira Lal, 1916 : 465).

The Korku, a Kolarian tribe akin to the Korwa and living in the western Satpura plateau, have an interesting legend about their origin. They state that Rawan, the demon king of Lanka, observed that the Vindhya and the Satpura ranges were uninhabited and besought Mahadeo to populate them. Mahadeo dispatched his messenger, the crow Kageshwar, to find for him an anthill made of red earth, and the crow discovered such an anthill between the Saoligarh and Bhanwargarh ranges in Betul. Mahadeo went to the place and, taking a handful of red earth, made images in the form of a man and a woman; but immediately, two fiery horses sent by Indra rose from the earth and trampled the images. For two days Mahadeo persisted in his attempts, but as soon as the images were made they were destroyed. At last Mahadeo made the image of a dog and breathed life into it. The dog kept off the horses of Indra. Mahadeo then made the two images of a man and a woman, and giving them life, called them Mula and Mulai. The two became the ancestors of the Korku. Mahadeo then created various plants for their use, the *mahul* from whose strong and fibrous leaves they could make aprons and head-coverings, the wild plantain whose leaves would afford other clothing, and the *mahua*, the *chironji*, the *sewan* and *kullu* to provide them with food (adapted from Russell and Hira Lal, 1916: 551-552).

Another legend told by the Korku, with the object of claiming for themselves a Rajput ancestry, is to the effect that their Rajput forefathers dwelt in the city of Dharanagar, modern Dhar. One day they were out hunting and followed a sambhar stag, which fled on and on until it finally came to the Mahadeo (or Pachmarhi) hills and entered a cave. The hunters remained at the mouth waiting for the stag to come out, when a hermit appeared and gave them a handful of rice. This they at once cooked and ate as they were hungry from their long journey, and they found to their surprise that the rice sufficed for the whole party to eat to their fill. The hermit then told them that he was Mahadeo and had assumed the form of a stag in order to lead them to the hills, where they were to settle down and worship him. "They obeyed the command of the god, and a Korku Zamindar is still

the hereditary guardian of Mahadeo's shrine at Pachmarhi" (Russell and Hira Lal, 1916 : 554).

Nanjundayya and Iyer have given accounts of the origin of various tribes in their volumes on *The Mysore Tribes and Castes.* The Beda or Berads were originally a hunting tribe of Mysore. They now call themselves Valmiki Kshatriyas. Their connection with Valmiki is founded on a tradition that the author of the Ramayana belonged to this community before his conversion. He was a highway robber of more than usual rapacity, and when he attacked Vashistha, the sage convinced him of the worthlessness of his bad life. Valmiki was so ignorant that he could not even pronounce the name of Rama. The teacher had to adopt the expedient of making him repeat the word *mara* (tree) in rapid succession to form Rama. As a result of his long meditation, the repentant hunter and robber achieved divine wisdom and was able to compose his epic. He begot twelve sons, who are the progenitors of the Beda tribe. Another explanation is also given of the term Valmikaru as applied to the Beda. It says that they are so called because during the first rains of the year they dig anthills, extract winged ants thereform, and eat them (Nanjundayya and Iyer, 1928 :198).

The Dombar are essentially a wandering tribe, though many of them have settled down in towns and villages. They are acrobats and tumblers by profession. Their tradition tells us that

> A Reddi had, by his younger wife, a son, who was born without any limbs...having on consultation discovered that the unfortunate child had brought ill-luck into the family, the Reddi commanded his wife to do away with the child. Her maternal affection induced her to temporize, and she hid the child in a manger. Cattle unaccountably died in numbers, and a similar result was observed wherever the child was removed. In despair the mother handed over the child to a wandering beggar, to be disposed of in some safe place, and the latter consigned it to a ruined well. The unwelcome brat...was not drowned. His cries attracted the attentions of...Parvati and Parameswara, who, on learning his unfortunate history, miraculously gave him his limbs, and at his request, bestowed on him a right to obtain an earthen drum from a potter's house, and doles of rice in each house to which he might resort for alms. The boy was so

> pleased at getting his limbs, that he jumped out of the well at one bound and cast himself at the feet of his divine benefactors. He was then enjoined to add the profession of acrobatic performer to that of itinerant beggar. The Dombars are his descendants by a concubine he picked up in his wandering tours (Nanjundayya and Iyer, 1930: 140-141).

Another story prevalent among the Dombar is that

> A Reddi's wife delivered a daughter in the field outside the village, where she had carried her husband's mid-day meal. A hut was improvised for her accouchement, and after it was over, her husband's elder wife, out of envy, contrived that she and her child should be regarded as outcastes. The father gave all his lands and agricultural implements to the progeny of the other wife, and left to these a drum, a pole and a rope. They had to earn their living with these implements alone, and learnt acrobatic feats. No one would marry a girl playing in public on a pole, and so the daughter, called Dembara Chinnasani, became a prostitute. This is said to account for the practice of dedicating prostitutes which is largely prevalent in this community (Nanjundayya and Iyer, 1930 : 141).

The Iraliga or Irula are another jungle tribe. The story of their origin as given by them is that no one could be found to collect honey on account of the stinging of the bees. A goddess was then prevailed upon to help. She created a man out of the sweat of her body. He was provided with a crowbar, a flint, and a scythe. He succeeded in the task allotted to him; the bees flew away from their hives as he approached. The Iraliga, who are his descendants, say that the smell of the sweat of their bodies drives away the bees. If they persist in remaining in the hive when approached by an Iraliga, he has simply to pass his hand over his sweated brow to drive them away. It is believed that even wild beasts will scent the Iraliga and fly before the aroma. Another legend claims that they are descendants of a *rishi* (holy man) who lived after the *Yuga Pralayam* (the Great Deluge) and was under the malignant influence of a curse. The rishi, who was in sympathy with the tribe, started living with them, and had several children (adapted from Nanjundayya and Iyer, 1930 : 379).

The Koracha, also known as the Korama or Korava, have an interesting legend to account for their origin. Parvati, the wife of Shiva, once disguised herself as a soothsayer. The Korma are her descendants, born to her in this garb. Another story connected with their occupation is that a Medar was asked to prepare a cradle for Parvati's child. It was to be made of a serpent, its stomach filled with precious stones. The cradle was unusable because of the rattling of the stones. Then a Koracha was asked to do the job. He was given a knotted serpent, and as the precious stones were tightly packed in their place by knots, no rattling was heard. He boldly took it, split it like a bamboo, and made a cradle. Both the tribes were enjoined to make a living by bamboo wicker-work; but the Medar still goes about in a gingerly manner, and splits his bamboo from the bottom, while the Koracha does it from the top. As a reward for the cradle made by him, Parvati presented the Koracha with a divining rod of the bamboo, and a window which she had been using herself for fortune-telling, and this is how the profession has come down to them (adapted from Thurston, 1909 : 585).

Luiz's *Tribes of Kerala* (1962) mentions several legends about the origin of a number of tribes. The Adiyan consider themselves to be the descendants of a Sivadwija Brahman, who ventured on a *parthiloma* union (marriage below the caste level, violating the rule of exogamy) with a non-Brahman girl. Another legend is that they are the progeny of a Brahman who lost his status by eating rice offered to Shiva, and thereby committed an *anarcharan* (improper act). They also claim that at one time they were priests in the Bhadrakali temples. The Eravallan assert that they are the offspring of incarnated gods, but have nothing definite to say regarding these gods or regarding their origin. This tribe has high moral standards and it takes pride in stating that in ancient times immoral women and unmarried girls going astray were punished with death. Some of the Kadar claim that they are the progeny of Nayars who were attached to the army of the early kings. The legends of the Kannikkar make the claim to their being the descendants of two tribal kings, Vurappan and Sithangan. The Kattunayakan have a legend which says that they are the progeny of Padmakhya (Padma, also known as Hudadubhatta), the gourmand son of a Heggade chief by his *rakshasi* (demon) wife.

There are several versions regarding the origin of the Kochuve-

lan. Some proudly claim descent from the ancestors of the famous god Ayappan of Shabrimala. There is another legend describing them as the offspring of the *munnu-manus-hians* (man of mud), who came out of a mud elephant which was made by Parvati but trampled by Parmeshwaram. They are also described as the descendants of Shiva. Another legend describes them as the progeny of the man who was created by god Parmeshwaram in answer to the prayers of the helpless Panchali, wife of the Pandavas, to help her wash the clothes while in pollution. The early orthodox belief that the correct standard of purity can only be attained when clothes are washed by a Velen is popular even now.

One legend describes the Koraga as the children of a Brahman mother and a Sudra father. On account of the difference in the social status of their parents, the children were treated with contempt in society. Another legend connects their origin to a Koraga chief, Hubushica (Habashika), who invaded the Tulu land and drove out Mayura Varma, the founder of the Kadamba dynasty. Later, the army of Habashika was defeated by Lokaditya Raya, son of Mayura Varma, and Brahmans were brought in to replace the Koragas. A third legend states that Habashika, king of the Chandalas, consented to marry Kanavathi, the daughter of Lokaditya, a Kadamba princess of the Varma family. At the marriage ceremony Habashika and his party were murdered by Lokaditya's soldiers, and his followers were driven into the forest. The Koraga are reported to have surrendered on the assurance that they would be looked after, but they were neglected and consequently became slaves.

The Kudiya claim that their early progenitors were gods who lived in the mountains of Coorg and that they are the original inhabitants of the district. The Kundu Vadian believe that they were closely associated with the fighting detachments of the early rajas of Kottayam. Some of them proudly assert that they are Nairs, who moved into key positions in the high mountains of Wynad to stop invasions.

The Kurichchian have a legend which states that the Nair of Travancore, who helped the Kshatriya rajas to terminate the rule of the Vedar kings of Wynad, were refused admission to the caste and their homes on their return to Travancore. They returned to Wynad, but on their arrival they found that the low-lying

arable lands had already been occupied. They were forced to take up abode in the high mountains. The Kurichchian consider themselves superior to all other tribes and castes, including even the Brahman.

The Mala Arayan narrate a legend to establish that they are the progeny of Gautama (the sage) and his wife Ahalya, who was turned into a rock by her husband when he found her in a compromising position with Indra. During his sojourn in the south, Rama restored her to life. She was reunited with Gautama. This tribe claims to be their descendants after the reunion.

A legend connected with the Mala Vedan says that when Lord Parmeshwaram went on a hunt with them, he was attacked. Those who deserted him came to be known as the Kaltan or the Ulladan, while those who remained with him and participated in the fight continued to be described as the Vedan (Luiz, 1962).

The Malayalar proudly announce that they were at one time attached to the army of the raja. Some of them were the palace guards of the raja of Kottayam. There is a story about a young Malayalar who was drowned in a palace tank. This incident roused the anger of others who, in simplicity and foolishness, fired heated arrows at the tank to punish it. On hearing of this foolish act the raja ordered that the Malayalar guards be taken to the forests and destroyed. The sympathetic vassals of the raja complied with the first part of the command, but refrained from killing them. Later, they regained the sympathy and protection of the raja by rendering him yeoman service at the time of an invasion. Pleased with their service, he reinstated them and also gave them land to cultivate. Some of them also claim that they are the ancestors of the royal family of Kottayam.

The Marati claim to be Kshatriyas and trace their origin from royal Rajput clans. They also vaguely suggest that their progenitors were gods. The Muthuwan have much to say about their origin. A popular story is that when the Pandyan rajas invaded the south during the 4th century, the Telugu Naickens moved into Bodinayakanur and drove the Muthuwan out of the forests of Madurai to the high Western Ghats of the Deviculom taluk. There is a legend that a group of Muthuwan went to pay their respects to the chief kartha of Nerimangalam with water in a kumbam. The woman who accepted the water on behalf of the kartha was declared outcast. She was carried away then to be the

wife of a Muthuwan. She is believed to be the mother of the Muthuwan *kuttom* (clans).

The Palliyar claim that their name originated from Valli, a *Palachi* (Palliyar woman) who was the wife of Subramanian, son of Lord Shiva. The Urali Kumman trace their origin to Padmakhya (Padma or Hudadabhatta), the gluttonous son of a Heggada chief by his demon wife. Another legend popular in the Nilgiri district describes them as the progeny of a man created by god Kamatraya from the sweat of his brow. Other stories indicate that this creator was Shiva. The Uridavan Gowdalu claim that they are a group of Oriyas who came south from their early homes in Ganjam district and that they belong to the Idayan community of Lord Krishna.

The foregoing discussion of the legends and traditions associated with tribe names reveals some aspects of the self-image and identity of the Indian tribes.

There are a number of tribes like the Ao, Angami, Lhota, and other Nagas; the Lakher; the Santal; the Munda; the Hill Korwa; the Musai; and the Hill Kharia who associate their origin with supernatural causation through stones, hoe in the earth, spirit, egg, scarecrow, serpent, and so forth.

Another group of tribes—the Kawar, the Koli, the Korku, the Kochuvelan, the Dombar, the Iraliga, the Koracha, the Palliyar, and the Uridavan Gowdalu—think in terms of a divine origin or associate themselves with well known mythological characters.

Yet another group of tribes—the Angami, Lhota, and Sema Nagas; the Padam, the Ho, and the Maler—tell us about the origin of various ethnic groups of people, including themselves, from the primeval choice of different portions of the flesh of a bull, or the ch oicemade from among meats of different types of animals and other varieties of food, or the choice of a particular mode of dressing.

A distinct category consists of those tribes whose self-image and identity relate to their descent from some well known sage or an upper caste like the Brahman or the Kshatriya. Names of the Oraon, the Kherwar, the Chero, the Birhor, the Adiyan, the Dhanka, the Marati, the Korku, the Beda, and the Mala Arayan can be mentioned in this connection.

Certain tribes like the Oraon, the Maler, the Tharu, the

Khond, and the Malayalar take pride in their royal ancestry, their forts, and their own kingship in the past or in their association with some royal army.

Biographical Studies and Self-Image of Tribals

From the world of myth and legend, we now turn to contemporary reality. Myths represent "social facts" of one order, empirical reality of another.

There are very few ethnographic studies which contain biographies of tribals. Even these studies go only into the events related to a person and hardly ever present data relevant to the theme of self-image and identity.

In his book *The Maler: A Study in Nature-Man-Spirit Complex of a Hill Tribe in Bihar* Vidyarthi (1963) has presented thirteen biographies. Many of them bring out that the Maler think themselves to be living at the mercy of the supernatural powers like *Gossaiyan Bhut*, deities, and spirits. They have a strong feeling that to survive in the hills they must please these supernatural powers.

The biographies assembled by Ehrenfels (1952) in his book *Kadar of Cochin* also suggest that the tribe live in a world full of spirits and deities. Tribal well-being depends on the propitiation of and the prayers made to them.

Vidyarthi (1971a) has sketched seventeen biographies of tribal leaders of Bihar. In some of them, the Oraon leaders are seen to take pride in their Sarna religion (indigenous tribal religion), which according to their estimate is the best religion as it was handed down to them by their forefathers. They also felt that neglect of their religion will make the *bongas* (supernatural powers) angry and revengeful. Their religion, they said, taught them to perform regular puja of their ancestors to whom they owe their birth.

Self-Image Reflected in Tribal Writing

Writings by tribals give us some insight into their self-image. Shaiza, a Naga administrator quotes the late Sakhrie, also a

Naga, who described the Naga as follows:

> Men and women have an equal social status. We have no caste distinctions. No high or low class of people. There is no communal feeling, neither are there religious differences to disturb our harmony....There is no minority problem. We believe in that democratic form of government which permits the rule, not of the majority but of the people as a whole. We govern ourselves by a government which does not govern at all.
>
> ...the family is a permanent living institution, a conscious unit in the national polity...no family has ever been left by their fellowmen to the mercy of circumstances...possessing its own house, built on its own land, no family ever pays tax. Forests and woodlands, rivers belong to the people for their exploitation without paying taxes. We cultivate as much land as we need or desire and there is no one to question our rights.
>
> We have food to eat and drinks to drink exceedingly above our needs. Truly God has been good to us. Three square meals a day and *zu* (rice-beer) without measure. We have no beggars. Every family lives in its village in its own right. It has no landlord to harass us and no revenue collectors to knock on its door, for the family is the master of its own affairs.
>
> And wonder of wonders, we have no jails. We do not arrest nor even imprison anyone. Our civil authority is God in the matter of life and death and murder is very rare.
>
> We fear nobody, individually or collectively. We are a healthy people and fear corrupts the health of man. What peace we have, no police and no C. I. D. We use no locks. Our granaries are kept outside the village and no guard is ever needed, for there is no one to steal from them. We travel as we like and it costs nothing. Wherever we go, it is our home. If by ill fortune, a man falls sick or dies, he is borne home to his family without counting the cost.
>
> We talk freely, live freely and often fight freely too. We have no inhibitions of any kind....There is order in this chaos and law in this freedom. If I were to choose a country, it would be Nagaland, my fair Nagaland—again and again (Shaiza, 1965 : 34).

Kerketta (1960) thinks that drinking of rice-beer is very common among the tribals of Chotanagpur and permeates their life style. The Oraon, the Munda, the Ho, and the Santal, all drink it so frequently as if it is drinking water. It is important on all occasions and for all the activities of the Oraon, and it plays a dominant role in their culture. He adds that the entire cultural configuration of the Oraon community, peculiarly enough, revolves around the pivot of *hanria* (rice-beer).

Oraon (1964) suggests several indicators of a tribe. Among them are ecological setting, endogamy, practice of tribal religion (animism), a tribal identity, and conformity to tribal culture and tradition. In this context he says that if a tribe is converted to another faith, this conversion would amount to detribalization. According to him "conversion is the escape from reality—the reality of being a tribe and a person on conversion completely disowns the tribal religion and it may safely be said that detribalization is prerequisite to conversion."

Hans (1965), writing on *Self-Identification and Destiny in Tribal Awakening*, says that he is well aware of the various terms like "aboriginal tribes," "primitive," or "indigenous" used by non-tribals to describe the tribal people, but these words are "relative terms." He says:

> They saw us only in relation to themselves and others in a particular time and place, and also 'underdeveloped' meaning, relatively speaking, much less developed than others.
>
> When we wanted to describe ourselves we did not have to use such relative terms. One of the earliest descriptions of ourselves is the racial name evolved for itself by one race belonging to those speaking the so-called Mon Khemer group of language. They call themselves the '*Horo*' race which means the race of 'human beings'. . . . To themselves therefore in the first instance the aboriginal tribes are just human beings.
>
> We are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that we are the indigenous people, the original inhabitants of the land where we live. This is of utmost significance for us. We have been in this land of ours since the dawn of history. Our records of rights are not in paper and ink: our burial and memorial stones prove our possessions. Consequently, we love this land of ours with an ardent love which cannot be compared with the love

of it by others...we thank God for what we are, namely, the original inhabitants of this land: it was He who placed us here, giving us this peculiar honour, entrusting this land to us.

Hans has also become painfully aware of the fact that they have been much exposed to the danger of losing their own lands. He says:

We have come to know how we have been exploited both directly and indirectly. We have seen those artistically terraced rice fields, built up with the loving labour and precious sweat of generations of our ancestors, slip out of our fingers into the possession of others giving place to modern industries. We have clung to our ancestral land because land has been our life-blood, without which we had no life and livelihood at all...(Hans, 1965).

At one place Hans says that the tribals have developed some special characteristics peculiar to themselves, which are tribal loyalties, a virile self-reliance, hard work and industriousness, conservatism, truthfulness and honesty, timidity and shyness, and drink and intemperance.

Dhan (1967), in her book *These are my Tribesmen: The Oraons*, analyzes the changes that have taken place in the traditional social system of the Oraon community. While commenting on urbanization and the Jharkhand movement she says that they have encouraged the growth of nationalism amongst the tribes of Chotanagpur. She adds that urban conditions encourage the creation of ties cutting across tribal affiliations. The formations of various associations and clubs indicate that similarity of interest, rather than tribal affiliation, is the criterion for membership. The Jharkhand movement has brought together the tribesmen in urban as well as rural areas, irrespective of tribal of religious affiliations. As distinct from individual tribal identities, it has projected a wider adivasi image and created a new tribal solidarity.

On the problems of readjustment to a new situation (with special reference to the Naga tribes) Alemchiba Ao says:

Irrespective of the different political system, levels of technology

> and economy, religious and cultural affiliations, we find today a general restlessness taking place among the hill people of the entire North-East of India. They are passing through a period of transition in their history, and in the process they are faced with a problem of readjustment to the new situation.
>
> For centuries, these tribesmen were isolated in the hills living completely independent and often with almost entirely self-contained economies, where unmolested they went through their narrow round of life, knowing practically no variation from generation to generation. In course of time contact with civilization came about in two ways; by the visits of the tribesmen to the plains lying along the base of the hills, and by the penetration of foreigners into the hills. The latter was the more important. Foreigners residing in the hills influenced the culture and mode of life of the indigenous inhabitants in numerous ways—by medical work, by missionary propaganda, by display of a culture in some way regarded as higher, by objects of trade imported by administration and the improvement of communication, by the presence of an armed force strong enough to suppress any rising or inter-tribal war (Ao, 1972 : 477).

About the relationship of the hill tribes with plainsmen, mainly the Assamese and tea labourers settled along the hill borders, Ao says it is not cordial. The tribals are treated as untouchables. They are denied shelter or even a glass of water. They have a distorted image of India because they project on the country their image of the non-tribal neighbours. He goes further to say that the effect of the Japanese invasion had been to give the Nagas a sense of partnership with all enemies of the Japanese in a spirit of collaboration, to put an end to a common mischief. As a result, all through the Japanese invasion of India, the Nagas had remained consistently loyal and helpful and they were of immense help to the British army in India in more than one way.

Shaiza and Hans have discussed the self-image and self-identity of the tribals, though not directly. Kushal Kerketta possibly overrates the role of rice-beer in tribal culture. Kartic Oraon evolves a rough test on the basis of which one can judge whether a community is a tribe or has ceased to be a tribe. Dhan focuses on the

emergence of a new identity, while Ao dwells upon the self-image of the Nagas in regard to their adjustment with the rest of the country.

SELF-IMAGE PROJECTED IN SLOGANS

Some of the slogans that the tribals raise during political occasions also give us an idea of their self-image. Vidyarthi (1971a) recorded some slogans of the tribals which the non-Christian (Sarna) tribals raised while demonstrating before the "Study Team of the Joint Committee of Parliament on de-Scheduling of the Scheduled Tribes" that visited Ranchi in 1966. The demonstration was, in fact, directed against the Christian converts as the non-Christians wanted the study team to de-schedule the converts from the government's scheduled list.

The placards displayed by non-Christian tribals bore the following slogans relevant to the present study:

Tribal culture is most primitive. It does not bear any impact of other religions;
May Birsa Bhagwan be glorious who fought with all the missionaries till the last to save tribal religion;
May Sarna Devi (sacred lady of the grove) be glorious;
Tribals are simple people. They are poor and uneducated. Please do not cheat them. Don't change their religion. Let them also march forward;
One can get God even by practising non-Christian Sarna religion;
Christianity is not a tribal religion; and
May traditional adivasi be glorious.

These slogans reflect the self-image of a section of the tribal people. They concede being primitive and assign to Sarna Devi a position of pride in their culture. The tribals view themselves as "simple, poor, and uneducated." They feel that they are susceptible to cheating and exploitation by others. They also identify themselves with Birsa Bhagwan who fought the Christian missionaries for the sake of tribal religion. In no way do the non-Christian tribals suffer from a sense of inferiority when they say

"one can get God even by practising non-tribal Sarna religion." These tribals feel proud in practising a tribal religion which is seemingly the most important component of their culture, for they think that the tribals who change their religion cease to be tribals.

Changing Self-Image and Identity

This survey of tribal self-image and identity will remain incomplete if we do not say anything about their changing self-image and identity. Because of the operation and impact of a number of factors and forces like Hinduism, Christianity, education, and politics there have been significant modifications in their self-image and identity. Historical processes have also made an impact.

Mazumdar (1944b: 95) observes that "from very early times there has been a gradual and insensible change from tribe to caste and many are the processes of conversion from tribe to caste." He says further that most of the lower castes of today had a tribal origin. Here Mazumdar's observations seem very relevant in understanding the changing identity of tribals, as a changeover from a tribe to caste, among other things, means a change of identity and self-image. A tribe remains a tribe so long it thinks of itself as a tribe, a category different from Hindu castes. But the process of change starts the moment a tribe starts identifying itself with Hindus. It is followed by automatic emulation of the Hindu model of life.

Risley (1915: 72-75) described four processes by which transformation of tribes into caste is effected:

> 1) The leading men of an aboriginal tribe having somehow got on in the world and become independent landed proprietors, manage to enrol themselves in one of the more distinguished castes. They usually set up as Rajputs: their first step being to get a Brahmin priest who invents for them a pedigree hitherto unknown;
>
> 2) A number of aboriginals join a Hindu religious sect, losing thereby their tribal name;
>
> 3) A whole tribe of aboriginals or a large section of it enrols

itself in the ranks of Hinduism, under the name and style of a new caste which, though claiming an origin of remote antiquity is readily distinguishable by its name; and

4) A whole tribe of aboriginals or a section thereof, becomes gradually converted to Hinduism without abandoning its tribal designation.

In these processes what attracts our attention most is the fact that because the tribals first identify themselves with the Hindu caste, other changes gradually follow. The example of the Mushars and the Bhuinyas of Bihar may be cited in this connection. They were originally tribals, but have now been incorporated into the Hindu caste fold. The Kharwar of Palamau and Mirzapur who claim a higher origin and wear the sacred thread; the Polia of Dinajpur, Rungpur, Jalpaiguri, and Coochbehar, who claim to have originated from Kshatriyas and call themselves Rajbansis, illustrate such cases of change of identity and self-image from tribe to caste.

In fact, change of identity from tribe to caste is taking place also in contemporary times as a result of the Hindu impact on the tribals. Griffiths (1946: 276-277), while speaking about the process of Hinduization of Kol tribes, expresses the view that they are apparently forming a miniature caste system within the tribe, modelled somewhat after the Hindu caste system.

Speaking about the concept of sanskritization, Srinivas (1952 : 213-214) says, that the rites and beliefs of the castes occupying the lower rungs of the caste ladder as well as the rites and beliefs of outlying communities, hidden away in the forest-clothed mountains of India, have been subjected to sanskritization. Sahay (1962) has examined this concept in the context of Hinduization in two Oraon villages of Chotanagpur. There many of the tribals prefer to call themselves Hindu and as a result of change in their self-image, they identify themselves increasingly with Hindu gods and goddesses and have adopted Hindu forms of ritual and worship and have given up eating beef under the influence of Brahman priests and other Hindus. A similar feature, though more intensive in nature, can be observed among the Munda of Panch Pargana area in Chotanagpur, where they identify themselves with Hindus and seek regular services of a Brahman priest and a barbar during *rites de passage,* worship Hindu gods and goddesses,

and have adopted the Hindu mythology in considerable measure (Sahay, 1967: 65).

Srivastava (1958: 64-69) tells us that among the two moieties of the Tharu of Uttar Pradesh one is considered superior to the other and no inter-dining or inter-marriage is found among them, which can be attributed to the "direct influence of the Hindu caste structure." The five Kuries in particular belong to the superior moiety of the tribe and claim themselves to be the Rajputs of the Sisodiya clan and have gone even so far as to adopt a new appellation of "Rana Thakur."

Surajit Sinha (1962), on the basis of historical and ethnographic studies of the Bhumij, puts forward the concept of "tribal-Rajput continuum." He speaks of the diffusion of the Rajput model among the tribals of central India like the Bhumij, the Munda, and the Gond and their changing self-image and identity accordingly (Surajit Sinha, 1962: 35-80).

Talking about the process of transformation from tribe to caste Sahay (1967: 64-89) refers to the change of identity of a section of the Pahariya of Lolki in Palamau from tribe to caste. A similar change of identity and self-image was studied by him among the Oraon of two villages in Ranchi, where he noted considerable sanskritization among the tribals. Since the Oraon identify themselves with the Hindus, they have given up eating beef, started performing the Satyanarayan pooja, have taken to reciting Hanuman Chalisa and Ramayana, and begun consulting a Brahman priest during eclipses.

Besides the Hindus, Christian missionaries are also responsible for bringing a definite change in the self-image and identity of the tribals. Sahay (1963) made a detailed study of the tribal Christian converts of Chotanagpur. This study helps us to understand as to how Christianity has brought about a change of self-image and identity among the tribal converts.

The immediate result is that the tribal converts begin to consider themselves different from the non-Christian and acquire a "sense of superiority" over the latter. They dissociate themselves from the non-Christian, thinking that the latter are an "inferior" people engaged in "spirit worship" which is no religion at all. On the other hand, as regards themselves, they think that they practise the "best religion of the world," are on the right path, that they will enter the Kingdom of God after death. Also,

tribal converts show an aversion for non-Christian tribals because the latter drink excessively, speak filthy language, and have a vulgar tongue; they perform traditional dances in the company of girls which is "immoral," and do not have proper manners or civic sense. The Christian converts consider themselves free from such vices and regard themselves better than the non-Christians.

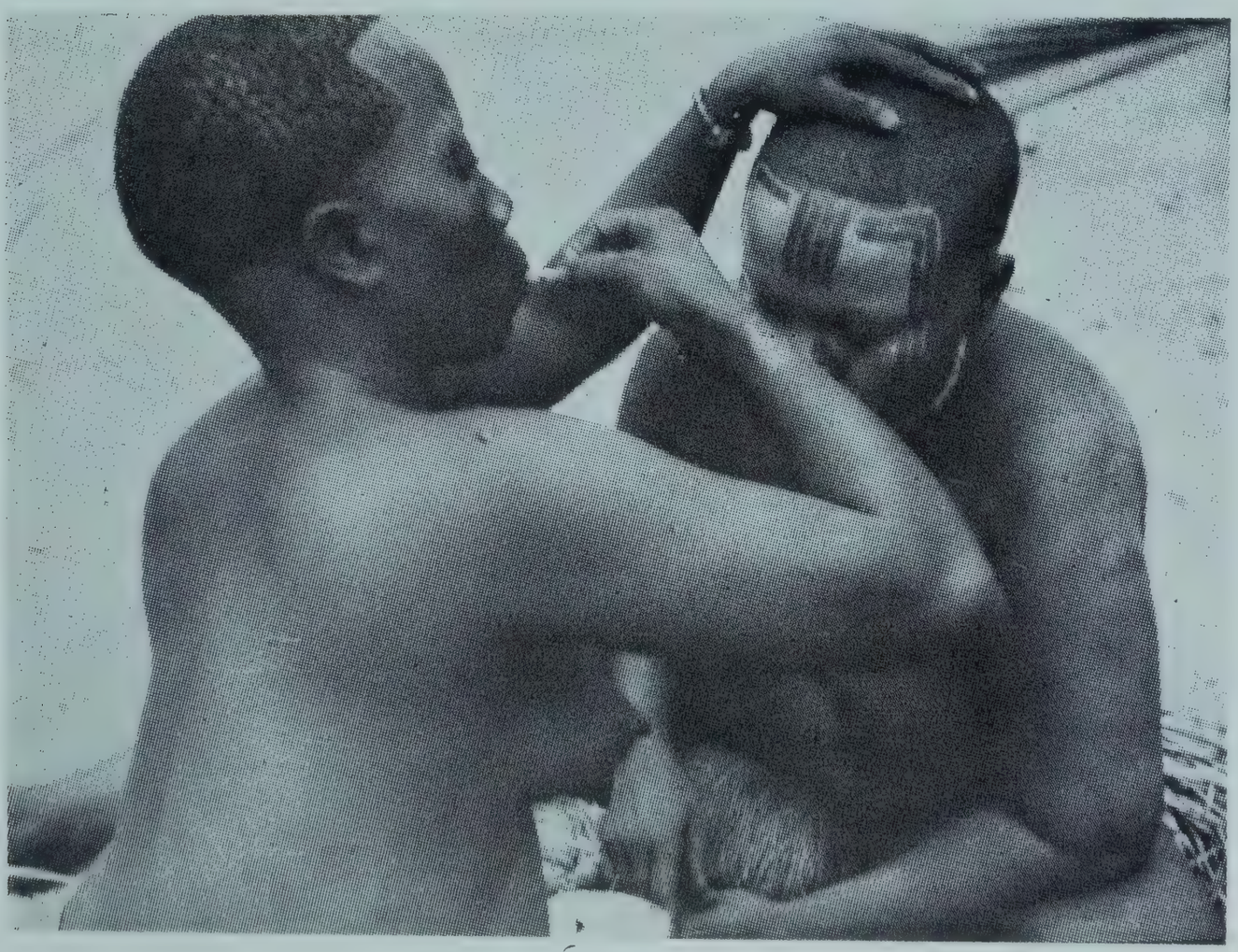
It is interesting to study the self-image and identity of the different denominations of Christian converts in relation to one another. Catholic converts consider themselves to be the true adherents of Christianity and the followers of the Pope, whereas the Lutheran converts are considered to be "deviants and hypocrites." On the other hand, the Lutherans allege that the Catholics have changed the original wordings and commandments of the Bible and indulge in image-worship in the form of devotion shown to St Mary. They also allege that the Catholics are intemperate and on this count cannot be distinguished from the non-Christians. On the other hand, the Lutherans think that they stick only to things prescribed in the original Bible. Unlike the Catholics, they cannot be dictated to by a priest or any religious authority. They also feel proud that they have given up the habit of drinking, as it pollutes the "temple" of God, that is, the human body, and that they eat better food than the Catholics or non-Christians. Their Bhajan sittings are claimed to be more systematic and rhythmic than those of the Catholics, and, unlike the latter, they do not "suppress the sinful acts of a Christian."

It is significant that the Oraon society which was culturally homogenous has come to be divided now because of the working of various denominations of Christianity; with conversion, their self-image and identity have also undergone tremendous transformation. Denominational loyalty has conspicuously cut across kinship and ethnic loyalties and the Christian converts of a particular denomination now consider themselves closely associated with another convert of the same denomination, even though he may be a non-relative and may even come from another tribe. Its extreme form of development can be found in the identity of tribal converts within Christian communities of the same denomination throughout the world, which works through international channels of communication which the Church maintains.

Education of the tribal people, and political education through participation, have also exerted a tremendous influence on the

A Kolam girl tattooing

An Onge woman painting face



Ornamented Lambadi girl

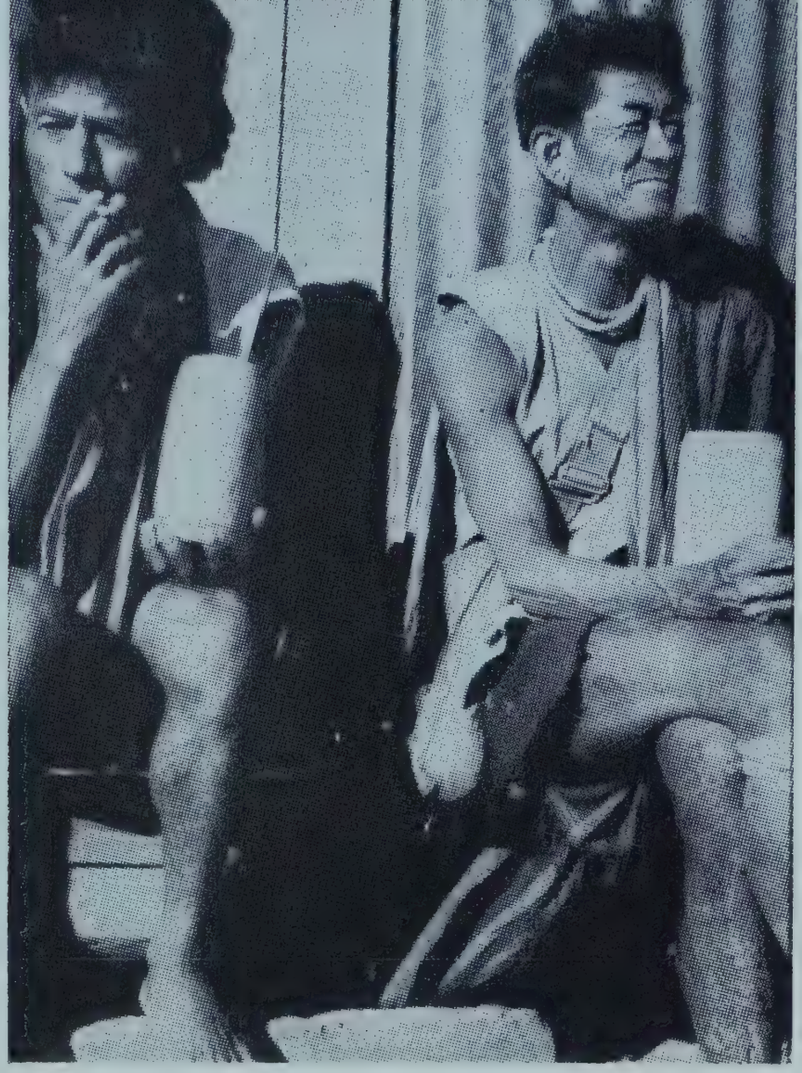
An old Garasia woman

The Tripura Riang pressing oil

An Onge couple

Angami girls in traditional dress

Bhotia girl—Chamoli



The Angami refresh themselves with local wine and a smoke

A Lahaulee on way home with a load of fodder

An old Rawat man at leisure

Kunbi Dang story-tellers

tribal self-image and sense of identity. Confined to their jungle fastness, they knew little about the world outside or what was happening there. Education and political awareness are giving them a sense of identity with their fellow countrymen. Not only have they come to identify themselves with political parties of their choice, but these factors have for the first time given them a national outlook and they have learnt to identify themselves with the problems of the country.

J. D. MEHRA

The World View of Indian Tribes

AN appraisal of the literature on the world view of Indian tribes presupposes that there is either a defined area of social life which can be termed world view or that world view is to be abstracted from observation of social life. Neither does social anthropology nor do its cognate disciplines, however, offer any widely accepted criteria for discussing world view in a cross-cultural perspective. What is understood as world view (Redfield, 1953) is labelled variously also as primitive categories (Philips, 1965), ethos (Bateson, 1958), forms of life (Wittgenstein, 1953), experiments for living (McBeath, 1952), style, super-style (Kroeber, 1957), pattern (Benedict, 1934), and climate of opinion (Whitehead, 1933). And this does not exhaust the list. These terms carry different shades of meaning and emphases, but nevertheless they do cover a great deal of common ground.

Significant work on world view has been done by Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton (1949), Daryll Forde (1954), David Mandelbaum (1955a), and Clifford Geertz (1968). The many conceptions of world view presented by them and others can neither be categorized in a simple manner nor logically correlated with one another. It would be useful, therefore, to examine briefly some of these varying approaches to the concept of world view.

Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton (1949), discussing the Navaho way of life, state that apart from ethics and values the Navaho, also have certain "basic convictions" regarding life and enumerate these in terms of basic premises and formulae.

The author is thankful to Vardesh Channa and Subhadra Mitra for help in collection of data.

The Navaho assumptions about life are generally unsaid, but no characteristic Navaho doing or saying makes sense unless it is related to the Navaho convictions about life.

Forde (1954), in his Introduction to *African Worlds*, maintains that the world view is expressed not only in the belief system but is also derivable from customs, rituals, and actions. Further, it is asserted that there is a close relationship between the beliefs and the contexts in which they arise.

Mandelbaum (1955a) lists three types of relationships to distinguish the contents of world view—man to man, man to nature, and man to the supernatural relationships.

Geertz (1968) differentiates between ethos, which he calls the evaluative elements of a culture, and world view, which includes the cognitive, existential aspects. He states that "a people's ethos is the tone, character and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood, while their world view is their picture of the way things. . . are, their concept of nature, of self, of society." Geertz thinks that the demonstration of a meaningful relation between the values of a people and the general order of existence is an essential element in all religions, no matter how those values or that order are conceived. He feels that religion is in part "an attempt to conserve the fund of general meanings in terms of which each individual interprets his experience and organizes his conduct." He sees sacred symbols as integrating fact with value and notes a general tendency to synthesize world view and ethos.

Alan Dundes (1968) points out that world view is often implicit rather than explicit. The people themselves may not be aware of their world view and may find it difficult to articulate it. According to him, accepting the holistic view of culture and the all-pervasiveness of world view within it, one could look for world view in any aspect of the cultural material—in kinship, in child-rearing, in politics, or in economy. However, he still favours folklore as the most important source for the study of world view.

Jones (1972) makes an attempt to reconcile the different approaches to world view and concludes that, at the level of the common denominator, it involves beliefs. He further develops his argument by postulating that beliefs are hypotheses framed by an observer about the motivations of the observed. From this he conceptualizes a belief space which has its threshold at the point of behaviour. Included in the belief space are narrow-range and

wide-range vectors. The former are specific for relatively determinate situations and "enable us to cope with some aspect of the social or physical environment." They are easily verbalized and consequently are easily taught and learnt. They are "more or less readily modifiable in the light of experience." The wide-range vectors have less obvious uses and are "less obviously related to the environment." They are not easily verbalized or they are not verbalized at all. "They may not be learnt at all but may be instinctual, those that are learnt are acquired easily in life and by means other than formal, verbal instructions." These are relatively incorrigible because they tend to be self-confirmatory. These vectors leave a trace that carries relatively greater effect. Jones defines world view in terms of very wide-ranging vectors.

A purely behaviouristic analysis of belief, however, is logically untenable and an attempt to do so ends in inconsistency. From a behaviouristic analysis of belief, it is possible for an observer to discover a belief held by a subject, even though the subject himself is incapable of formulating the belief in question by merely observing the subject's behaviour. However, the notion of belief is connected with the notion of meaning, expressions of belief are vehicles of meaning. Meaning, while it resides in a medium like language, gesture, or stance, has also a meaning for the subject. The subject, if he then meaningfully employs a bit of language or gesture, must be capable of seeing the meaning himself; otherwise he cannot be said to have used the language or gesture meaningfully. A behaviouristic analysis of belief cannot consistently account, with its own premises, for this aspect of belief.

Further, to claim that world view can be discovered by observation of behaviour alone is an exaggeration, because beliefs which constitute world views vary in the degree of their range. Thus, to love one's fellow-men follows, in so far as a person is a Christian, from the acceptance of still wider beliefs concerning the nature of the Christian God and such a god's relation to man. However, in non-Christian societies also, men love their fellow-men as such as Christians do. In such societies an individual's love of his fellow-men may follow from still wider vectors which have nothing to do with the corresponding vectors in the Christian belief space. Thus the two kinds of love are quite different from one another, and a purely observational enquiry will be

incapable of bringing out this difference. The kinds of behaviour in which such love is expressed may be the same in the two cases, but the observation of such behaviour alone cannot form the basis of any inference to the very different wide-range sets of belief which respectively constitute their justification.

Thus, what we really have is a series of world views derived by various authors without any explication of the methodology followed to derive them. There is no standardization of approach or methodology of deriving world view, and this makes comparisons difficult. Jones at least suggested a standardized way of deriving world view by advocating a behaviouristic approach, but this approach runs foul of the limitation of this method itself. The extant literature on world view, therefore, is heterogenous. What we have are really categories under which to put world view, however conceived, but no coherent and organized methodology of world view derivation.

This overview of the definitions of world view clearly indicates a relationship between social structure and world view. However, a problem has been raised by Furer-Haimendorf (1969) in *Apa Tanis and Their Neighbours*, in which he shows that the two neighbouring tribes of Apa Tani and Dafla, though differing widely in their social structure, yet show striking similarities in their world view. This refutes the one to one correlation between social structure and world view. This problem needs further probing.

Another approach to world view is that of Bose (1971) who uses this concept in the sense of the French word *l'espirit*. For him, world view springs from the inner self, through new knowledge and faith in past history. It is a weave of tradition, of current experience, and of hopes and fears regarding the future. World view then is linked with social change inasmuch as manifest dysfunction is to be removed. However, whether an ethnographer can possibly grapple with the world view of an entire community, or confine himself to the study of that reflective minority in a society that thinks and initiates, is an open question.

It is necessary to distinguish between concepts like cultural emphases, themes, ethos, and so forth, which constitute materials for world view, from attitudes which do not influence the direction of life styles of a people holding such world views. World view must be that which by its existence influences the life patterns.

The problem of designation of world view and of deriving it

from the relevant data will become, in the final analysis, the problem of a choice of approach. Upon this choice will depend the standardization of world view and hence its comparability. Thus scholars like Jones, Forde, and Leighton have different approaches and the problem takes the form of making sense out of the diversity of views represented by them. In including these diverse approaches and derivations in the omnibus concept of world view, we are in effect attempting to cover, albeit non-rigorously, all material, however conceived by their authors, assuming it all to be world view variously defined.

It is not our immediate concern to evaluate or postulate an orientation of world view derivation, be it behaviouristic or non-behaviouristic, because no standardization has been attempted. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the world view of the Navaho, for instance, derived by whatever methodology, behaviouristic or otherwise, is insightful in its own right, presenting thus the problem of choosing any one approach in preference to the other. This will explain also the astounding mosaic that exists under the rubric of world view in anthropological literature. What is lost in comparative finesse is gained in wider coverage of the multiple orientations of peoples' perception about their world and themselves.

For the purpose of the present essay we shall avoid involvement in the controversy regarding the definition of world view, and use an operational definition given by Daryll Forde (1954) in his Introduction to *African World*, in which he relates world view to "the place of man in nature and society."

The world view of Indian tribes is a subject which has not attracted the attention of anthropologists. It is evident from the fact that there are very few works that treat this subject at any length or in any depth. Published literature on the world view of Indian tribes is very meagre, even casual references to it are scanty.

Faced with the problem of presenting profiles of the world view of Indian tribes, one could either attempt a content analysis or review the work done in this area in an analytical framework. An attempt to do the latter is difficult because no widely accepted evolutionary or a structuralistic scheme of world view is available. A content analysis can be attempted, taking into account geographic, linguistic, and structural variables; but as there is very

little published material the geographic and linguistic variables cannot be represented adequately. In this essay, categories have had to be made in accordance with the nature of the available material on world view. Of first concern to us are those authors who look at their unit of study with the specific aim of delineating the world view of their subjects. In this category there are two sections—the first deals with the material on world view of tribals in India in general terms, while the next section deals specifically with data on the world view of particular tribes. In the next category is incorporated the raw material of traditional ethnography which has some relevance to the world view of the tribes. Such data, however, are embedded in general ethnography and merit careful examination as they implicitly contain important material relating to the world view of the tribes. This material cannot by itself be read fruitfully as indicative of world view, until it is analyzed with that specific aim in mind. To this end an attempt has been made to break this material down into self-explanatory categories.

There is also a body of material pertaining to the general area of folklore, myth and related subjects which can throw some light on the world view of the people concerned. To analyze this material is essential, if the implied world view is to be derived. As things stand in the extant literature, this class of material exists only as raw data and requires further research.

World View of Tribal Communities

Bose (1953, 1971), writing about tribes in general, states that each period of history is marked by a particular set of ideas which are born out of the changing experience of life and which may be called the "soul of culture." The character of this is seen as having changed from time to time and the outward form of the social organization has also been reorganized in conformity with the changing circumstances. Bose goes on to assert that the thoughts, attitudes, and experiences of people are in unstable equilibrium with the external or outer framework of culture, the latter showing a lag in adjustment. The institutions of one age are continued into the next, bringing in new ideas and experience, resulting in the necessity of constant readjustment of cultural forms. Thus, one

comes across "a constellation of ideas and emotions which form the core of a community's culture." This core may change due to internal or external factors, and in the event of a discord between the outer framework of culture and the "soul of culture" change occurs and proceeds towards greater logical conformity between the two.

Bose states that the world view of a community does not remain constant but is reshaped as its components keep changing. He thinks that there are two elements common to all communities, which try to build a spiritual refuge from which they seek guidance for courses of action in everyday life. One of these elements is the belief that the source of knowledge is often something more than that derived from sense perception and logical constructs based on them. This knowledge is derived in large part from poetic imagination or extrasensory sources, termed revelation. This revealed knowledge cannot be shared with others and is unverifiable unless others undergo the same regimen, and it is this feature that stamps such knowledge with the seal of unshakable validity. Further, in such knowledge there is a high degree of empirical content and firmness of faith which persist in spite of the counter-tendencies of history or the experiences of life.

Such a world view, Bose emphasizes, provides an escape from reality, and, because of this, religion is often criticized as the "opiate of the masses." Bose however disputes such a construction on religion and says that such a world view opens also the door to creative activities. Thus, religion in history has "served a community when it was bogged in the quicksands of immediate experience by spurring it to new activity leading to clearance of the boggling bondages."

Mandelbaum (1970) gives an overview of the world view of tribal communities in India. The tribes believe in kinship as the principal link. Equality is the basic organizing principle. Some tribes are highly individualistic and there is little dependence. When incorporating new groups into the tribe, they absorb them only in the form of fictive kinsmen, as kinship to them is the major binding force in society. In this context Mandelbaum cites the example of the Khond. The tribesmen do not mind working against the values and opinions of their society in order to pursue pleasure or to acquire wealth. They also prefer leisure to work

and do not seek long-term rewards because they believe life to be uncertain. The tribals combine short-term benefits of religion with the long-term transcendental function. They do not distinguish sharply between the shaman and the priest. No value is set on asceticism or puritanism. They derive a great deal of delight in the pleasure of their senses.

Surajit Sinha (1957a), in his paper on the tribal cultures of peninsular India, suggests that the ideological system of the tribals covers man to the supernatural, man to nature, and man to man relationship. The gods are classified into those that are benevolent and those that are malevolent. These gods are portrayed as being more interested in personal loyalty than in any demonstration of ethical or moral virtues. Rituals are performed mainly to avoid sickness and death. There is a belief in the existence of soul after death. All souls go the same place and there is no idea of heaven or hell, only those who die an unnatural death turn into malevolent spirits. There is no reward or punishment for good or bad deeds after death. There is some sort of belief in reincarnation, but it is not associated with Karma as in Hindu philosophy. There is a predominant belief in magic and witchcraft. In the man-nature relationship, beliefs show the natural universe to be continuous with the human world of interactions and sentiments. Man, nature, and the supernatural are all bound within a common boundary of relationships. The entire universe is believed to be animated by spiritual beings. The man-to-man relationships are confined to their tribal world. All human beings are believed to be more or less equal and there is no concept of stratification. Elders are respected, children are valued, and barrenness is feared. The males are generally dominant in social life. They lay emphasis on "pleasure" and on the maintenance of reciprocal and obligatory relationships. There is little desire to achieve high status and the aspirational level in terms of material achievement is low.

Let us now turn to the world view of particular tribal groups.

Carstairs (1957) cites the Bhil as an example of a society that presents a contrast to the high-born Hindus. The Bhil are aggressive and have no qualms about robbing either each other or strangers. They believe in a vigorous sex life and spend a lot of their time in eloping with each other's wives and entering into quarrels about these elopements. Magic and witchcraft play an

important role in their lives, while religion occupies a lower niche. They have a vague conception of a Supreme Being called Bhagvan, but are not too particular about his worship. Marriage partners are regarded as equals and a close personal relationship exists between husband and wife. Their conjugal life is marked by much love and affection. They do not approve of celibacy and asceticism. They pride themselves on their uninhibited life style and believe in enjoying life in full measure.

Ghosh (1968) quotes Maquet to the effect that the world view of a society is based on the experiences, both past and present, of the group. Therefore, world views show a time lag in relation to the society as it exists. In world view study, the perspective of the anthropologist differs from that of the philosopher. The former focuses on the categories and concepts of the concerned culture, while the latter emphasizes categories and concepts and their logical correlates determined by himself or his subject. He deals with the Mishmi of the Lohit district of NEFA. The socio-linguistic aspects, ethnocentricism, and the emotional aspects of Mishmi life, understood in terms of dominant underlying motivations, are dealt with. To him the world view is a mental disposition or "a way of looking at things." It is transmitted from one generation to another and is conditioned by culture, language, and religion. The Mishmi environment of the plains and the hilly uplands, marked by heavy monsoons, produces a special situation for them. On the one hand rain is necessary for slash and burn cultivation, on the other excessive rain is harmful. The visible and the invisible worlds are equally real, but the latter is unpredictable. Interaction of man, nature, and spirits is an essential part of life but the consequences of such interaction are interpreted as being good or bad, successful or unsuccessful. Being traders, the Mishmi are familiar with the idiom of profit and loss. The role of women is distinct from that of men. Marriage is viewed as marking the dichotomy between wife-giving and wife-receiving groups. The supernatural world is classified into benevolent and malevolent categories. Clans are big or small. Similarly, natural things are seen as either big or small, utilitarian or otherwise, harmless or harmful. This dichotomous orientation is also reflected in the appropriate division of dreams into opposed categories. In language also the present is opposed to both the past and the future. The past is seen by the Mishmi as continuous,

completed, or recent. The "case form" expresses the dichotomy between local and non-local, with every noun or verb in a case characterized accordingly.

According to Ghosh the following categories represent equivalences that establish this sense of binary classification:

1) Male—animate—sacred—superior—big—fertilizing—rains; and
2) Female—inanimate—profane—inferior—small—fertilized—land.

However, among the Mishmi, the dichotomy between male and female is refuted by the use of a single word for he and she. Analyzing the Mishmi social personality Ghosh finds them melancholy and more expressive of unhappiness than happiness, a fact indicated by their folklore, songs, and myths. Another characteristic trait among them is egocentricity, "self above clan and clan above tribe is the maxim." Further, the interest shown by the Mishmi in concrete rather than abstract things reflects the dominant motivation to utilitarianism. Another dominant notion, flexibility, Ghosh finds difficult to describe. It is indicated mainly by the easy-going attitude and an absence of rigidity. Emotionally the Mishmi form isolates. There is a tendency towards suppression of feeling which is extended even to sexual frigidity. Emotional involvement of husband and wife is rare. A fundamental conflict expressed in their world view is the basic idea that life is both hostile and manageable, that nature has to be combated yet accepted. The Mishmi mother does not involve herself emotionally in the child after it is two or three years old, thus giving rise to an egocentric personality in later life. The early withdrawal of affection makes the Mishmi reserved about bestowing love all their lives.

Koppers (1954-55) bases his study on fieldwork conducted among the Bhil of central India and the Yamana of Tierra del Fuego. The major themes that he takes into consideration are the concepts of paradise and fall from innocence, of a supreme and benevolent god, and the ethical bases of incest and exogamy. He regards each of these concepts to be universal. The myths of creation and the deluge, found among primitives, show similarities to the Biblical and Hindu Puranic myths. The High God among the primitives is generally a remote figure who rarely interferes with human life. He is followed by a host of lower gods

and spirits, who are more closely concerned with human fate. Koppers' main concern, however, is to criticize the evolutionary model of human society, by comparing the primitive beliefs with those of more advanced religions.

Mandelbaum (1955a) gives an account of one aspect of the world view of the Kota. He first comments on the definition, the process of delineation, and the usefulness of the concept of world view. He uses Redfield's model according to which world view may be studied in terms of man's relationship to other men, to the supernatural, and to nature, as well as in terms of other denominators common to all societies, such as biological stages in life, annual ceremonial and economic cycle, and the orderly perception of time and space. For the Kota world view, Mandelbaum chooses to emphasize only their man to man, man to supernatural, and man to nature relationships.

The area of behaviour most suitable for the expression of world view among the Kota, according to Mandelbaum, is that concerned with the funeral. There are two funeral ceremonies, one at cremation and the other at the end of the ritual year. The most significant behaviour on these occasions is the ritual of "bowing to the dead." This bowing is the cause of much quarrelsome strife, because only those related to the deceased are allowed to bow and those not related must be prevented from doing so, because the act of bowing creates a relationship where none exists or which is disputed by real relatives. Those who ought to bow but are reluctant to do so must be cajoled into bowing. This drama is sought to be understood in terms of the world view of the Kota.

To the Kota, their gods are powerful and can affect them materially. They do not require constant attention but they must be handled with care. Sorcery is to be counteracted with magic, it does not involve the supernatural directly. Gods are viewed mechanically and the supernatural is not involved in the areas of a man's life that concern victory, defeat, or reward. The relationship of the Kota with nature does not engross them nor is work of much interest to them. Their relationship to domestic animals is of greater importance to them. The Kota, however, place great store by their relationship to other men. The self in itself is not of prime concern. Women do not figure prominently as sources of conflict between men. Children are considered

important, the Kota is expected to exert himself for the sake of his sons throughout his life. Yet even this relationship does not absorb him totally. The main focus of his attention is the relationship he has with his peers. Brothers are united against the outside world. This unity is laced, however, with a keen awareness of a sense of equality and of the rights of an individual. The equality principle runs through all units of social organization involving status positions such as the family, clan, group, and village membership, with the implication that any transgression of such rights is to be met with immediate, forceful, and aggressive defence.

Closely linked to the idea of the preservation of the self is the notion of ritual pollution. Birth, death, and menstruation are regarded as polluting events and appropriate rituals have to be performed to restore an individual to the natural ritually purified state. Further repollution is prevented by the denial of a particular relationship. This is best illustrated in the pattern of acceptance and denial of relationships implied in the ceremony of bowing to the dead.

Other values in Kota life are mediation in quarrels, accumulation of wealth, children, and equality. It is to be noted, however, that the idea of equality is compromised since men are regarded as superior to women, elders have precedence over juniors, common people are inferior to those holding secular status, who in turn are inferior to those holding sacred office.

Mandelbaum then goes on to make a comparative assessment of the world view of the Kota and other communities. He cites Srinivas on Rampura and shows that both the Kota and the people of Rampura have a preference for long-term over short-term relationships. The unity of the group principle is emphasized among both, while the concept of pollution is also undergoing change in the two groups. In the Nilgiris, as in Rampura, status is often situationally determined, but while the hierarchic order in Rampura is unified by certain links, it is not entirely so among the Kota. The Kota are then compared with the villagers of Namhalli as described by Aan Beals. It is the external world that claims the marked attention of the latter because socio-economic and political changes have influenced the village. The Jajmani system has been gradually eroded and social life is becoming more impersonal, making it more imperative for one to defend

one's status. Factionalism is rife. Important questions that arise are the effects of the villagers' views on the changes brought about and the selections that operated consequently.

He then draws parallels between the Rajputs, studied by Gitel Steed, and the Kota. Though they both have a common focus in world view, they differ in other respects. Both are sensitive to any affront to their status, but the Rajput defends both his personal and societal rank, while the Kota is particular about only his personal status. The Rajput fights while the Kota contents himself only with arguing. The two world views are similar in regard to conceptions of pollution and social disability.

The Kota and the Camar of Madhopur are then compared. Both are low ranking, both maintain their status by withdrawal of relationships, and both are concerned with upward mobility and are taking to sanskritic ritual because they feel a need for higher ranking. Both tell a story about a once higher status and a subsequent fall therefrom.

Gough's account of Kambapettai Brahmans is taken up for comparison with the Kotas. Self-protection and pollution are important concerns for both groups as are peer relations. Neither the Brahmans nor the Kota believe in physical aggression. To the Brahmans, wealth is of great importance and status is precisely determined, while for the Kota, status is significant and wealth rates lower in priority. Both share a similar cultural base in respect of the idea of pollution but vary in their respective responses to it. The Kota place more emphasis on peer relations, while the Brahmans value both the peer and the lineal relationships. This raises the important question of the determination of the relationship between social structure and world view.

The comparison of the Kota with the villagers of Kishan Garhi reveals parallels in the effect of the Great Tradition and the process of modernization.

Lewis's paper (1955) comparing Rani Khera with Tepoztlan is to be seen against the situation among the Kota. The Indian villagers share the concepts of hierarchy and pollution and relationship with the wider society, concepts which are foreign to Tepoztlan. Extroversion is more characteristic of Tepoztlan.

It is thus demonstrated that the concept of world view is instrumental not only in deriving an inside view of culture but also in providing an overall statement to agents of change,

statements which are obviously applicable to large regions.

Orans (1965), in his study of the Santal, seeks to understand the sources of their verve and vitality. He demonstrates the mechanism whereby the Santal gather unto themselves the dispersed and fragmented bits of their culture, which is threatened by an acculturative intrusion, to forge anew a dynamic and sustaining cultural rubric that is viable and prestige-maintaining. He pictures the Santal, in the throes of inevitable change, as striving to cling to a cultural anchor as a protective mechanism in the vast alien waters of an inimical and threatening ocean of change. In this thrust and parry, the Santal emerge as a people, who, in their quest for cultural identity, consciously forge their own Great Tradition, as a challenge and bulwark against the waves of impinging cultures. In this consciously constructed tradition is reflected their world view. In the titanic struggle between tradition and modernity, the Santal world view changes to adapt to the circumstances of the existential state, not however to become unrecognizably metamorphosed, but retaining a fundamental, albeit truncated, form.

The *leitmotiv* of Santal culture is "pleasure." They conceive of the good life as "one with ample scope for and indulgence in pleasure, while maintaining social obligations to corporate groups." The word *raska*, meaning pleasure, is "often on the lips of the Santal and is dear to their hearts." The content of "pleasure" is dancing and singing, eating and festivity, playing and music, and by implication sexual activity. Greetings between two Santal take the form of the query: "How is pleasure in your region?" Nostalgia for the pleasure of bygone days haunts the old as they hear the recurrent cry of *handi, handi* (pot of rice-beer) issue from Santal lips. This pleasure complex is a shared understanding which serves to cement the solidarity of the Santal. It is pre-eminently a social phenomenon—obtaining during festivals—born of the festive atmosphere, which only the assembled community is capable of generating. It reaches a crescendo in the burst of empathy and emotion of the traditional group dance, wherein men alternate with women, hands touching hands, to sway to the undulating strains of their music. The Santal, in subscribing to this pleasure principle, forge bonds of unity with other Santal and participating Munda groups. By the same token, the Santal differentiate themselves from other sur

rounding groups, which not only do not share the Santal view of pleasure but actually look down upon their preoccupation with pleasure, regarding it as unbridled debauchery.

Another basic strand that weaves in and out of the Santal world view is the notion of envy. This is manifested in the cleavage of the haves and the have nots, which has, as a consequence of present day inequalities of wealth and status, become aggravated. Contemporary changes brought about by education and economic development have produced conflicts in the minds of the Santal, in respect of the traditional values of pleasure and envy. The traditional "pleasure orientation" is being replaced by an increased commitment to "rank improvement." Expression of faith in and commitment to the pleasure principle is difficult for the uneducated Santal in the presence of educated Santal, for fear of scorn and contempt. But the educated, the employed, and the rich Santal find themselves the targets of much envy, and they cavil at this rampant superstition.

It is in this changing situation that the Santal seek to produce a new world view, in the form of their own Great Tradition in preference to the acceptance of a readymade tradition of their neighbours. This newly created tradition places great emphasis on work, study, and rank attainment with a concomitant discouragement of the traditional pleasure complex, in respect of which the emerging elite feels a sense of shame. The traditional overemphasis on pleasure is held to be the cause of the lowly status of the Santal amongst other groups of the surrounding caste Hindus. The new ethos devalues pleasure (at least excessive pleasure), emphasizes work, mobility, and progress. However, the movement has not succeeded to any great degree in changing the dominant motif of Santal culture and world view, other than that of those segments that are educated and are in non-traditional occupations. Likewise, the new movement attempts to dilute if not efface, the deeply ingrained notion of envy from Santal perspective. The irrationality will disappear, it is hoped, with increasing education.

David Roy (1938) sets out to describe the "Khasi's own view of his relations to other people in the world." A Khasi thinks of himself as the centre of the world. The Khasi believe that while the mother bears the children, it is the father who bestows on them status and position, assisted by the brothers of the father,

The Khasi regard all those born of the same womb as bound to one another in a sacred relationship and hence barred from intermarriage. He further distinguishes those related to him "through the umbilical cord" alone from those "related through both the umbilical cord and the breast." The Khasi meaning of life is to spread, to grow, to combat, and not to remain suppressed or confined. There is no bar to marriage to anyone except those born of the same womb. There is no distinction of class, creed, or colour. The greatest sin to the Khasi is committing incest because all sacred things are ringed by their particular taboos.

Surajit Sinha (1957a) follows the lead given by Redfield and Singer (1954) and Redfield (1955) in an attempt to understand the tribal cultures of India within the framework of the Great and Little Traditions. The tribal cultures considered are those of peninsular India and include published accounts and personal fieldwork data. The tribes discussed, in respect of their world view, include the Munda, the Santal, the Ho, the Kharia, the Bison Horn Reddy, the Kadar, the Gond, the Khond, the Bhil, and the Bhumij.

He notes a certain continuity between the cultures of the tribes and the Hindu peasantry, more so in respect of the lower castes. The social field of the Great Tradition is seen to extend to tribal cultures, though at the ideological level there are significant differences between the tribes and the Hindu peasantry.

Among the tribals, the sun and the moon are deified and there are numerous spirits and gods connected with the village—the ancestors, the hills, and water. These are either benevolent or malevolent and are not concerned with morality. The soul, at death, joins the ancestral spirits, but there is no conception of heaven and hell. Though there is a belief in transmigration and reincarnation, it is devoid of ethical considerations. Rudimentary idolatory, magic and witchcraft, and rituals involving animal sacrifice are the other features which characterize the tribals. The tribal world is peopled with personalized and impersonal supernatural powers which are viewed in human terms. Their world view is limited to their known relationships. Thus, there is a stress on reciprocity and equality, morality is seen in its consequences for the group, elders dominate and are respected, while children are wanted and the good life revolves around pleasure.

Surajit Sinha goes on to delineate some aspects of the world

view of the Hindu peasantry and to draw some parallels and differences between the tribals and the peasants in this respect. The Hindu peasantry draws some of its gods as well as the concept of Dharma, from the Great Hindu Tradition, while other gods are locally associated with the village, caste, lineage, family, and the individual. Heaven and hell are conceptualized, and abstinent behaviour is related to happiness in the next world, though there is just as much concern with the material aspects of life in this world. Reincarnation is intimately connected with ethical behaviour and results in a hierarchy of forms of life for a soul which repeatedly reincarnates.

The world view in respect of man-nature relationships among peasants is similar to that of the tribals, while the man to man relationships extend to the state. Hierarchy is part of the ideological system, and pleasure-seeking is tempered with the philosophy of hard work. In terms of aspirations, the peasants can be said to be more aspiring than the tribals. In support of the contention of the continuity of the tribal and Hindu peasant supernaturalism, Sinha quotes the works of Risley, Gait, Elwin, and Ghurye.

An attempt will now be made to abstract features of world view from data scattered in ethnographic accounts of different tribes. It was felt that this material could be grasped meaningfully if clusters of themes were made, into which these data could be grouped. The planned order roughly follows the geographic and linguistic lines along which tribal communities in India are placed. The following main themes in respect of world view appear significant: myths and legends of origin, man to supernatural relationships, man to man relationships, and man to nature relationships.

CREATION AND ORIGIN

According to Elwin (1958), in his *Myths of the North East Frontier of India*, the tribals attribute the origin of every living thing, including trees and grass, to the love-making of the earth and the sky who are lovers. Furness (1902) says that the Naga legends regarding the creation of the world are vague. The Miri believe that two of their gods, Chelok and Nagman, made the hills and valleys and that the world was populated by the offspring of

one mother who emerged from the ground, giving birth to man, bear, deer, tiger, elephant, and rat. Godden (1896) describes the origin of the Ao Naga from stone, while the Rengma Naga believe that a man met a woman in a jungle, married her and had four sons: Ram, Krishan, Ahom, and Naga. Goswami (1955) cites Hutton's alternative version of the origin of the Naga and the plainsmen. Hutton (1920) is of the view that all Naga tribes link the ancestry of man and tiger very closely. The Angami, the Sema, the Lhota, and the Rengma Naga believe that the first spirit, first tiger, and the first man were the three sons of the same mother. Das (1945) states that the different Naga and Kuki (Purum) tribes emerged from underground. Hodson (1908) indicates that the Meithei trace the origin of the royal clan from a god, who could assume the shape of a man or a snake by night. Parry (1932) says that the Lakher believe that earlier on man was immortal, then the dog swallowed the sun and some men were changed into stars and others into monkeys. Later, when almost everyone was dead, with only a brother and sister surviving, they married and became the progenitors of the human race. Rongmuthu (1960), in his collection of the folktales of the Garo, states that the Achicks believe that man was created by the Supreme God. The Gallong, according to Srivastava (1962), believe that they are descended from Sisi, the earth mother. Watt (1887) in his *The Aboriginal Tribes of Manipur* states that the Kapui believe in a supernatural being who is regarded as the creator of all things. Elwin (1954) notes that the tribes of Orissa share the theme of a marriage of a brother and sister in their creation myths.

Culshaw (1949) states that the Santal believe that the human race is produced from goose eggs. S. C. Roy (1912) says that the Munda believe that a Supreme Deity created the universe, while the Hill Bhuiya of Orissa, Roy (1935 : 58) states, believe that the Supreme Being—Dharma—created the world. The Jaung, according to Elwin (1948), likewise believe that the Supreme Being—Dharma—made the world in two and a half portions. Dube (1951) states that in the Kumar myths of origin the deluge figures importantly. Griffith (1946) says that according to Kol tradition the earth was created by Brahma and that the Kol have sprung from the gods that descended from heaven to help god Rama who was in exile.

Elwin (1946) notes that the Baiga, the Bhuiya, the Birhor, the Chero, the Gond, the Munda, and the Santal have similar myths about the creation of the world. The Supreme Deity is pictured as creating the world (often after destroying it), and in this process birds and animals help out. Creation is further seen as being stabilized through blood sacrifice or by the use of nails which are transformed into parts of th e body. Mankind is believed to be created after the formation of the world and as issuing from a man and a woman, who either appear together or follow each other in birth. They are described as having come naked into the world. The creation myth usually incorporates the story of a deluge in which a human couple invariably survive, who can be even a brother and sister. Elwin further notes that in these stories the world is seen as having been created by the Supreme Deity out of already existing matter, or out of nothing. According to S. C. Roy (1935) the Hill Bhuiya of Orissa conform to the general pattern of creation stories as depicted by Elwin. The Bhuiya believe that the creator, Dharma, existed before all else. From the ocean arose the earth, and Dharma created a man and woman out of mud, the first couple was killed, however, by a tiger created by God and their blood was used to steady the earth. The ancestors of the Bhuiya sprang out of mother earth. For the Bhil, their Bhagwan created man. Then there was the deluge, only a man and a woman survived. God asked them who they were. They replied that they were brother and sister. Then God turned them back to back and asked them the same question to which they replied they were man and wife.

Naik (1956) gives an almost identical account of the Bhil myth of creation, as also an alternative version of the ancestry of the Bhil to the effect that a man displeased Mahadeo by killing his bull Nandi and was outcasted to become the ancestor of the Bhil. Ghurye (1957) states that the Mahadev Koli believe that they are the descendants of a black dog that emerged from the body of King Vena. Ehrenfels (1952) states that the creation myth of the Kadar centres round two holes in the ground on rocky ridges. The rising waters of the ocean filled all the crevices of the earth and threatened to submerge the two holes, forcing the divine beings inhabiting the holes to come out. Two of them came out naked, married, and had children. They also created the "big mountains, the trees, and all things." Rivers (1906) mentions

that the Toda believe that a god created buffaloes and the Todas. The god is said to have created the first Toda woman from out of the first Toda man, who emerged out of the earth holding the tail of a buffalo. Among the Reddy of the Bison hills the deity Bhimana made the earth (Furer-Haimendorf, 1945). The Tharu, according to Srivastava (1958), trace the origin of their tribe to a time when the king of these parts was defeated by an invader, and the women of the royal palace fled into the jungle and gave birth there to the ancestors of the Tharu.

Out of the diverse material on origins considered so far, some broad generalizations can be attempted. Notwithstanding the cultural differences of the tribal communities concerned, and despite their geographic and linguistic differences, some common themes seem to run the gamut of origin myths. It appears that such stories attempt, albeit somewhat differently, to offer explanations regarding the creation of natural and supernatural phenomena and the beginning of the procreative process. The concern in the former problem is either with the pre-existing state of things or creation is seen as spontaneous. The procreative process is pictured invariably as part of a larger process.

The stories of origin and creation express certain recurrent themes such as a deluge, or the involvement of the supernatural or of animals in the act of creation. In some of these stories Hindu influence is conspicuous, while the themes depicted in other stories have their parallels in Hindu mythology. It is difficult, however, to assert that there definitely is a Hindu influence in these stories, especially in view of the fact that the authors of these papers and books are themselves silent on this subject.

The stories pertaining to the beginning of the reproductive cycle involve a man and a woman who mate or marry, and who are pictured often as being brother and sister, thus conceding the possibility of an incestuous relationship in primary reproduction. Other stories, however, see the first man and woman as husband and wife, even though it is stated that they had a common parentage or origin, which fact would make them brother and sister.

Man-Supernatural Relationship

From Elwin (1958), one learns that among the tribes of NEFA there is a widely held belief in a kind of Supreme Deity. The

dangerous fire-spirit of the Mishmi is the son of their Supreme God. Whenever he sees evil rampant he comes down from his abode in the sky to destroy evil in his flames. Sacrifices made to the gods are believed to be accepted and consumed by them. There is a general belief in soul, which wanders about during sleep and which leaves the body on death to journey to the land of afterlife, the latter being modelled somewhat on the life-ways on earth. The Apa Tani, according to Furer-Haimendorf (1962), believe that supernatural beings surround them, beings which have human attributes but are endowed with superhuman powers. The beliefs of the Dafla follow the pattern indicated by Elwin for the other tribes of NEFA in respect of supernatural beings and spirits (Shukla, 1959). The Dafla, however, have little or no idea about the next world, nor do they believe in reincarnation. The Aka accept a hierarchy of supernatural beings—some benevolent, others malevolent—ruled over by the Supreme Deity (Raghuvir Sinha, 1962). Srivastava (1962) states that the Gallong exhibit a fear of the unknown and always worship the supernatural. The Supreme Being is rarely worshipped for it is regarded as being natural. Spirits are either malevolent or benevolent, and life in the other world is akin to life on earth.

Rongmuthu (1960), in his folktales of the Garo, describes the Achik belief in a divine mother who ordains the life of every individual. For the Lakher, the human soul has the form of the human body but is invisible. It leaves the body at night and causes dreams to occur (Parry, 1932). The Kacharie believe that the earth, air, and sky are alive with numerous invisible spirits, some of whom interfere in the affairs of men and cause sickness, famines, and earthquakes (Endle, 1911). Needham (1962) states that many aspects of the ritual life of the Purum can be understood in terms of the dichotomization of their world symbolically into two divisions. Das (1945) in his ethnographic account of the Purum has stated that they believe in personalized supernatural beings and also in the existence of the soul after death. Shaw (1929) writes that the Thadon Kuki are so much concerned with life in the next world that slaves are killed to accompany the chief on his journey to the next world. Hodson (1908) comments that the Meithei regard the sun and moon as supernatural beings. The aboriginal tribes of Manipur, apart from believing in a Supreme Being, admit also to a belief in numerous

spirits, one of which induces them to do evil (Watt, 1887).

The Naga tribes of Assam, Manipur, and NEFA are ethnographically well represented. The Nagas of eastern Assam believe in a goddess that mortals cannot see but only hear, and who can make people go crazy by breathing on them (Furness, 1902). About the Sema Naga, Hutton (1928) says that the Naga rationale for head-hunting is that it adds to the soul matter of the hunter. According to Mills (1922) the Lhota Naga believe in a soul that wanders in dreams. The Ao Naga believe that the earth and the sky, the houses and the villages are all permeated with spirits, from whom issue evil, disease, madness, and death (Smith, 1925). Most actions are deemed neutral, but they may be wrong in so far as they offend a spirit. Malevolent spirits receive more sacrifices as compared to the benevolent ones. Their religion is characterized by emphasis on practical matters rather than by feelings of devotion. The Great God above controls man's destiny in a blind game. The other world is akin to this one and the ruler of the land of the dead is an Ao Naga transformed into a god. Fear of the departed is the basis of ancestor worship. The Santal, according to Kochar (1963) believe that the world is peopled by a horde of spiritual beings called Bongas, some of whom are directly connected with the welfare of particular persons or groups. The attributes of these Bongas are not clearly formulated because the relationship of the Santal with the supernatural is hedged in by a wall of fear, secrecy, taboo, and mystery. According to Mitra (1928) the Santal believe that Thakur Baba is the sun, his wife is the moon, and the stars are their children. Sugiyama (1969) attributes to the Munda a reverential fear of the supernatural, and also a belief in the hierarchy of spirits which includes the sun, ancestor spirits, and village and hunting deities. Roy (1912) describes the hierarchy of Munda spirits ranging from the Supreme Deity, the village deities, and gods of the household to nature gods and guardian angels. The soul goes to its abode at death and man is reborn as animal or man, according to his deeds.

According to Das and Raha (1963) the Oraon hold a belief in a Supreme Being, in a soul, and in various evil spirits. Such supernatural powers are regarded as governing human' destiny, though allowance is made for the influence of human endeavour and to the operation of natural causes in the affairs of man. Roy (1915),

commenting on the Oraon of Chotanagpur, states that this tribe thinks of the universe as imbued with power or energy. It is considered expedient and wise to align oneself with the benevolent powers and to avoid or humour the evil ones, and to this end sacrifices are made to the appropriate powers and ceremonial feasts are held. About the Birhor, Roy (1916, 1918, 1925) states that they believe that spirits abound in man's natural environment and that life proceeds from stage to stage in terms of increasing contact with the spiritual world, with death signifying a fusion with that world. The spirits and man struggle in the arena of life while the Supreme Deity watches.

Majumdar (1950) says that the Ho believe in an all-pervading, impersonal, and indefinite Energy which is the cause of all effects on earth. S.C. Roy (1935) states that the Hill Bhuiya of Orissa believe that their world is peopled by innumerable spirits organized on a hierarchic basis. The highest being is the Supreme Deity who watches the struggle between spirits and men. An ancillary belief concerns disembodied forces capable of effecting events.

Elwin (1954) finds a hierarchy in the supernatural world of spirits reflected in the tribal myths of Orissa. At the apex is the Supreme Being and below him a number of lesser supernatural beings, mostly malevolent. Interspersed are mother earth, deities, and other godlings of the hills, forests, mountains, and rivers. The ghosts of the ancestors are regarded as dangerous and have to be propitiated. The other world is ruled over by the god of death. A few tribes believe in reincarnation. The Dorla of Bastar, according to Hajra (1970), have a pantheon of gods, goddesses, and spirits; ancestor worship, magic, and witchcraft are prevalent. The human soul at death returns to its abode. They have a clear conception of heaven and hell. The Muria of Bastar, in the estimation of Elwin (1947), have faith in a Supreme Being who created death so as to ensure a steady supply of souls for himself. Gods are visualized in the image of man. They wield influence over events on earth. Man has three souls which continue after death and evince interest in the maintenance of law and order in the tribe.

Dube (1951) sees the Kamar distinguishing between a corpse which becomes an evil spirit and the *jiv* or soul which goes straight to Bhagwan. The Maler, according to Vidyarthi (1963), repose faith in four classes of spirits who exert control over events in the

family, the village, the fields, and the forests. The supernatural is split into benevolent spirits, ancestral spirits, evil spirits, and the power inherent in witchcraft. Some of the tribes in Maha Koshal, though aware of the biological basis of conception, credit pregnancy to supernatural agencies (Elwin, 1944). The Saora mythology is a manifest effort to make more bearable the horror and mystery of the unseen, by recruiting gods and ghosts to serve as links between the Saora and the other world. Elwin (1946), writing about the tribes of middle India, states that they regard the sun and the moon as personalized beings endowed with more or less supernatural powers, being male and female or brother and sister. The Raj Gond of Andhra Pradesh, according to Furer-Haimendorf (1953) claim that God sends the soul as an embryo at birth and recalls it at death. It is only the personality of the individual that goes to the land of the dead, while the soul is reincarnated. Naik (1956) holds that the spiritual beings of the Bhil are essentially ambivalent. Rituals are performed to ensure the cooperation of the capricious gods. The Toda regard their gods as anthropomorphic beings (Rivers, 1906). Furer-Haimendorf (1945) says about the Reddis of the Bison hills that they worship the earth mother and believe in spirits and spirit-possession. Only the numerous deities present in the hills are propitiated to ward off evil and not the gods, since the latter are not concerned with morality. Diseases are attributed to spirit intervention or to magic. Man (1883) states that the Andaman islanders believe in a Supreme Being who is the arbiter of the fate of the soul, which repairs to him at death. The Khasa of Jaunsar-Bawar (Majumdar, 1962) regard the sun, the moon, and the stars as their gods. Srivastava (1958) notes the Tharu belief that when a person is killed by a tiger his spirit becomes a ghost, and a good person is reborn as a human being and an evil person as an animal.

It is apparent, thus, that no unified pattern emerges from an analysis of the relationship of man to the supernatural among Indian tribes. A common feature, typifying the variegated mosaic that is tribal India, is the belief in and existence of a multitude of supernatural beings and a recognition of the relationship between the living and the dead. A rough categorization of these diverse data can be attempted, though it would be hazardous to make cross-cultural comparisons or to derive any generalizations. Broadly, then, it can be stated that the supernatural is looked at

in two major perspectives. One view perceives the supernatural as being largely capricious and the other sees it as reflecting the corresponding content of the action of man on earth. Thus, the crucial questions to be resolved are: Whether the supernatural beings interact with men on the basis of the moral order? Or, do they have an independent basis of action? Another major strand that emerges is the concern with the status of the Supreme Being, not so much in terms of the genesis and development of the concept, but in terms of a system of logic in the supernatural world.

MAN-NATURE RELATIONSHIP

Elwin (1958), writing of the Singhpo, states that to them the rainbow is a ladder by which a god climbs to meet his wife in the land of the moon. The Tagin regard the rainbow as a bridge over which the bride goes to her husband's house, while the Sherdukpen see the rainbow as arching coloured spirits scanning the skies in search of elusive wives. To the Minyong, lightning is the flashing of the divine mother's eyes, while the Mishmi look upon it as a beautiful star-girl traipsing across the sky. The Lakher say that the earth quakes when the sky makes love to the earth. Fire is variously seen. The Dafla would have us believe that during the deluge fire hid in a stone, but the Wanchoo assert that it bided in a tree trunk.

Animal lore is varied and colourful. The assistance of animals in the making of the world is recognized, as also the fact that animals act as instruction models teaching men and women skills in arts and crafts. The leech serves symbolically to represent sexual and vengeance motivations. Stories about snakes are fanciful and free; to wit, insects and poisonous small-fly are the cursed fruit of the illicit union of a maiden and a snake; the blood of an incestuous youth killed in an ignoble quest is the poison in the fangs of snakes. In Bori, Bugnu, and Taraon Mishmi stories, the marriage of a girl to a snake is an oft-repeated theme, with an outraged brother killing the snake and the girl being left with a horde of illegitimate insects and snakes.

A Nocte story has it that the rooster reigns supreme since even the sun and the moon obey him, and his crowing tells men that

they may occupy the earth, for the first waters have ebbed. To the Wanchoo, birds gave the boon of death. Birds are also regarded as messengers and helpmates of men. Dogs figure, both as clever and stupid creatures, in the tales of the Bori, the Minyong, the Kameng, and the Wanchoo, among others. The Taron assert that a monkey gave birth to a boy and a girl, who later became the ancestors of the Mishmi. Stories of men turning into tigers and cats abound. According to Hutton (1921b) the Sema Naga, though not deifying the forces and phenomena of nature, do regard them as manifestations or the abode of spirits. The sun and the moon are objects of nature and the stars are men transported to heaven after death, while the comet is the soul of a great warrior. All the Naga tribes admit of a special relationship with tigers and a belief in lycanthropy is common to most of them. Smith (1925) attributes to the Ao Naga the belief that a solar eclipse is caused by the tiger swallowing the sun. The Hill Bhuiya of Orissa think that the spirits of men killed by tigers and bears assume these very shapes and haunt the neighbourhood (S.C. Roy, 1935). Elwin (1944) in his folktales of the Maha Koshal relates stories in which animals are depicted as helping the tribals in their quest for love and treasure.

The animal world, thus, finds a prominent place in the myths and folklore of the tribals of India, though this does not throw much light on the everyday pattern of interaction between men and animals.

Man-Man Relationship

Furer-Haimendorf (1962) says that the Apa Tani take great pride in their own culture and have a strong sense of identification with their group. They see themselves as a people apart from the surrounding populations. Their system of stratification admits only masters and slaves. No serious sentimental attachments are formed between men and women. A slain enemy is prevented from pursuing the slayer in the next world by gouging out the eyes and cutting the tongue and hands of the dead. Honour, peace, and public opinion are valued and harmony is the keynote of their lives and relationship with men, nature, and the supernatural.

The Aka conceive of an ideal man as one who is imbued with the spirit of service, is tolerant and ever ready to help the destitute, is cooperative and does not think too much of himself (Raghuvir Sinha, 1962). Srivastava (1963) states that among the Gallong, children are valued while incestuous relations and killing of clan members is regarded as wrong. Shukla (1959) asserts that the Dafla are basically individualistic, the only bond of cohesion being their feeling of oneness born of the blood tie and clan spirit. The Dafla accept no authority and do what they please, irrespective of whether it is social or anti-social, provided they think themselves capable of doing it.

According to Smith (1925) the Ao Naga are egalitarian and abhor formality. Though they are characterized by an independent personality, individual freedom is conditioned by traditional beliefs in customs and religion. The conservative stance is favoured and entrepreneurship is not encouraged. They are a happy people, valuing leisure over material goods.

Shaw (1929) states that the Thadon Kuki are generally individualistic, obstinate, and wilful as a consequence of indulgent socialization. They are highly egotistical and have an exaggerated sense of self-importance. Men are not sentimental but women are very much so. They have a happy disposition and enjoy jokes. Elwin (1939) cites the Baiga saying, "a Gond, a woman, or a dream never belong to a person," while Dube (1951) states that the Kamar regard themselves as pure and free, and as being individualistic and unworried about the future.

The data in respect of man's relationship to other men among tribals are much too fragmentary to permit of generalization, but some features and attitudes appear to be common to many tribes. Thus, individualism, tribal identification, cultural pride, egalitarianism, and a desire for harmony characterize a tribal's approach to his fellow-men.

A large body of source material for world view, concerned with the fields of folklore, myth, and related subjects, exists in the context of Indian tribes. However, this material is too scattered and is often masked and parades under different banners, to refer sometimes obliquely to a possible conceptualization of the world. Such material awaits processing and analysis before it can yield any indication of the world view implied therein.

PROMODE KUMAR MISRA

Patterns of Inter-Tribal Relations

THIS essay reviews inter-tribal relationships in India and attempts to show the existence, if any, of a broad pattern of these relationships. A study of this nature has some inherent difficulties. First, there is the problem of providing clear indicators of what a tribe is. Secondly, there is difficulty in isolating tribals from the other population and discussing the relationships only among the tribes. In the anthropology of this decade, one would not like to enter into a controversy regarding the definition of a tribe and it cannot be assumed that the tribals, whichever way they are defined, interact only with other tribes.

The problem of defining a tribe has been with anthropologists and administrators for quite some time (Ghurye, 1963: 1-22). Though the debate has been largely unproductive, it should be noted that while scholars were looking for an apt definition they were keen to distinguish clearly a tribe from a caste. The anthropologists working among tribals in the northeastern hill region, Andaman islands, or some remote forest areas did not find it necessary to distinguish between the two; on the contrary, they found some similarities between them. But for many scholars, caste was one category and tribe another, and in many ways they were the opposite of one another. The distinction between the two still remains blurred.

Though one may not agree with any of the definitions of tribe or caste, our knowledge about tribals has gone far beyond the stage of defining a tribe. A series of perceptive writings of Surajit Sinha (1958, 1965), within the framework of the Indian civilizational model, and of Bailey (1960, 1961), based on the interaction model, provide useful perspectives to understand the tribes

and the milieu in which they exist. Now we know, for instance, that the Kadar, the Bhumij, and the Apa Tani, even if they are all to be described as tribals for the sake of convenience, are not the same. Further, scholars have examined different systems of production and their management, the processes of interactions with different forces, and the resulting historical development among the tribals. For example, we learn from Suresh Singh that

> All over the Munda land before the coming of the alien Zamindars and moneylenders (dikus) in the 19th Century, the loom of the time wove tribal and non-tribals (sadan) into a socially and economically integrated pattern. The latter respected the social and economic superiority of the Mundas, and through their functions imparted a fullness and an economic self-sufficiency to the total tribal village. The Mundas, in turn, did not look upon them as aliens (dikus) but accepted them as adjuncts of their communal life. The extent of this integration at the lower level is apparent from the similar pattern of life led by the tribals and the non-tribals. The social occasions such as the name-giving ceremony, marriage, names of days and months, household utensils, tools, and weapons, dress, houses and even the language are common to both (Suresh Singh, 1966 : 12-13).

The developments at the turn of the century or even a little earlier in the Chotanagpur area have been entirely different. A depth analysis of different areas may reveal different historical developments. In the not too distant past, say in the 1930s, 1940s, or 1950s, a majority of the tribals in central India were preparing themselves to throw away their tribal identity and assume the cloak either of Hinduism or of Christianity. Could it be that the administrative fiat of declaring some people as scheduled tribes and giving them special protection halted this process? The answer to this question would lie, however, in a detailed examination of the historical forces at work in different areas. But the reality in which we live today is that the constitution of India recognizes some groups of people, specified from time to time, as scheduled tribes. For them there are special provisions in the constitution. These provisions provide at least

a working definition of a tribe as a political category. According to the 1971 census, the total population of the scheduled tribes in the country was 6.9 per cent of the country's total population. Here we will be concerned with this population and shall try to see how different scholars have presented the relationships between different tribal groups.

Notwithstanding the administrative declaration that certain groups of people belong to the scheduled tribes, there still remain some loose ends. A tribe may have several subgroups. In some cases these subgroups have been listed as independent tribes and in some others as part of the parent tribe. For the purpose of this study, this poses the problem whether interaction between the subgroups of a tribe is to be treated at the same level as the interaction between two tribes or differently. For example, the food-gathering Jenu Kuruba (Karnataka state) consider any group living beyond their immediate vicinity, even though called by the same name, as an independent group. Because the interaction of the Jenu Kuruba is limited in space, groups which are beyond their immediate vicinity are strangers to them. But the situation is entirely different in the case of the Munda or the Oraon tribes. The position adopted by the ethnographers of such tribal groups has been followed in this study.

For the purpose of this essay, Roy Burman's division of the tribal communities living into five territorial groupings is adopted (1972a : 39). Roy Burman's territorial divisions do not include the tribals living in the Andaman islands and they have been included here in the south Indian zone.

Inter-Tribal Relations

From the available literature on the tribes of the country one gets the impression that anthropologists have tended to treat tribes as isolates. In a large number of studies one finds a detailed description of the life and culture of a people, but nothing or very little on their relationships with other groups (Roy, 1915, 1925; Elwin, 1942; Majumdar, 1950; Dave, 1960; Das and Raha, 1967). The ethnographer arrests time while giving a descriptive account of a people; while reading the monographs on several tribes one gets the impression that all external relationships of these people

have been frozen. Though our understanding about tribes in general has increased immensely, the established tradition of treating tribes as isolates still continues. This is evident in the selected studies cited above. These studies cover a period of more than half a century, and one can easily go back another fifty or a hundred years and show that it was no different then. Some stray books and papers then, as now, presented descriptions of the relations of a tribe with other tribal groups; however, the frequency of such works is greater now, and the analyses are more sophisticated (D. P. Sinha, 1968). But the literature on inter-tribal relations still remains conspicuously limited.

In this survey, an attempt has been made to present the material that has been published on inter-tribal relations. It also examines the questions that have been raised and answered on the theme. And it offers some suggestions regarding what more is required in this aspect of tribal studies.

A survey of literature on the Indian tribes shows that the material published on inter-tribal relations can be discussed in an historical, economic, social, ritual, and political framework. The framework of analysis is not spelled out clearly by different authors; the material also does not necessarily appear in that order. But in presenting this survey an attempt has been made to stick to both as far as practicable.

Northeast India

The first ethnographic monograph on the tribes living in the hills of northeast India appeared a long time ago. There has been very considerable change in these parts in recent years. The tribal population of this zone, according to the 1971 census, is 21.7 per cent of the total population of the zone, and 0.73 per cent of the total population of the country. In states like Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Arunachal 88.6, 80.5, and 79.0 per cent of their population respectively are tribals. This area was relatively isolated, had a preponderant tribal population, a self-sufficient economy, and, with the exception of Tripura, had a relative absence of agrarian tensions and problems (Suresh Singh, 1972: XV). In this area the notable changes are the beginning of settled agriculture, development of marketable surpluses, monetization of the tribal economy, and the rise of a new cultural and political

consciousness. In many respects the area came closer to the rest of the country, but at the same time relationships of hostility also developed. Some sections of the Naga and the Mizo had a different perspective and were averse to coming into the political framework of the country. The aspirations and problems faced by the present generation of the tribal people are reflected in a series of seminars organized by the Council for Cultural Studies and India International Centre; the spokesmen were tribals from Nagaland, Mizoram, and Arunachal. The deliberations were ably summed up by Roy Burman (1973a). He argued that ages appear to have telescoped in northeast India. The tribals of this area have played the role of bridge and buffer to their neighbours. Those who lived on the borders of India and Tibet acted as a bridge between their neighbours such as the Toto between the Bhutiya and Koch Mech; those who lived on the borders of India and Burma played the role of a buffer between their neighbours such as the Mizo, the Kuki, or the Naga. In this sense they were not isolated but themselves remained ageless. This agelessness was somewhat forced on them by the dominant political groups on either side (Roy Burman, 1966, 1973a, 1973b). However, the two most profound changes which have taken place in this region in recent times are the creation of the states of Meghalaya, Tripura, and Manipur and the two Union Territories of Mizoram and Arunachal; and the emergence of independent Bangladesh.

Whatever was written on this area before 1950 or in some cases even afterwards, belongs now to history. Furer-Haimendorf (1939), in his Preface to the *Return to the Naked Nagas*, the second edition of his book *The Naked Nagas*, states that much has changed since he wrote the book. Nonetheless his travelogue helps us to understand the relationships of hostility and friendship between different Naga tribes and also the relations between the different villages. During his travels in Nagaland in 1936 and 1937, the tribe Furer-Haimendorf chose for intensive fieldwork was the Konyak Naga. His account of them (Furer-Haimendorf, 1969), however, contains very little information on the relationship of the Konyak with neighbouring tribal groups.

Elwin's two books (1959, 1969) contain a selection of the writings of administrators, soldiers, missionaries, and explorers on the people of the area, from olden times down to 1900. These

writings are often biased, but they are valuable in their own right for they help in understanding the people and their relations with each other in these areas.

The monographs of Hutton (1921a, 1921b) on the Angami Naga and the Sema Naga, though they do not give much information on the relationship of these tribes with others, show clearly the virtual independence of Naga villages and the ambivalent inter-clan relationship. These aspects have changed considerably since then. In the appendix to the book on the Angami Naga, Hutton has given an interesting and useful chart which shows how different tribes referred to each other.

In the monographs of Mills (1922, 1926, 1937) on the Lhota Naga, the Ao Naga, and the Rengma Naga, one gets detailed ethnographic accounts of the individual tribes, inter-clan feuds and friendships among them, and some general idea of the relationship of one Naga tribe to another. For instance, we are told how the Ao were pushed by the Lhota and the Sema before the British appeared on the scene. Describing the changed state of affairs Mills tells us that

> By putting a stop to head-hunting the British Government has profoundly changed the mode of life of all the tribes in the administered area of the Naga hills. In the old days war was the normal and peace the exceptional state of affairs. War between Lhota villages was rare and it was absolutely forbidden for one Lhota to take another Lhota's head. But unless peace had been definitely arranged, any village of another tribe was regarded as hostile and fair game (Mills, 1922 : 104).

Furer-Haimendorf's *Himalayan Barbary* (1955) is about the people in the Subansiri division of the northeastern frontier. In this travelogue the author traces historical relationships of the Apa Tani, the Dafla, and the Miri. He presents a good number of cases which illustrate the ties of friendship and hostility among the tribal groups living in the area. These cases show the economic interdependence of the people of the region, their concept of justice, the process of negotiation among hostile camps, the status of slavery, the relative values of the items exchanged between them, and the role of leaders in promoting mutual understanding and in resolving or aggravating problems.

We learn much about the relationship of the Apa Tani with the people who live in their neighbourhood in a later publication of Furer-Haimendorf (1962). In this the author tells us that the Apa Tani are the only tribal people in Subansiri who practise settled cultivation and their economy is stable and highly specialized. Because of this specialization, the nature of their economy is complementary and they have to depend upon their neighbours for certain goods and services. The Apa Tani villages are densely populated and their lands are well used for settled cultivation. They have no scope for animal husbandry, particularly for raising *mithan*, an animal which they require most for ritual sacrifices and food. Their animal requirements are mostly met by the Dafla in exchange for rice. The Apa Tani also supply rice on credit to the Dafla. Most of their disputes with the Dafla are on account of trade deals involving the sale of rice on credit. The Apa Tani have a highly developed weaving industry. They buy raw cotton from the Dafla and gin, spin, dye, and weave it and may sell their textile to the Dafla. The Apa Tani women are expert weavers. The Apa Tani are also good at making swords and knives which the Dafla take in exchange for pigs, dogs, fowl, tobacco, cotton, etc. Some Apa Tani also make earthen pots which they trade with their neighbours. They have trade relations but Furer-Haimendorf (1962 : 51) writes, "... no currency is used in trade transactions between the Apa Tanis and Daflas, but both tribes have their systems of values, which though similar do not completely coincide." He adds that the Apa Tani had trade relations with Tibetans also but not directly, and states:

> ...though occasionally the hostility of neighbours may deter even the intrepid Apa Tani from visiting trade partners in distant valleys, there is no other tribe in the Subansiri area which has developed barter and trade to so high a degree as the Apa Tanis. The exchange of goods is a necessity for the elaborate and complex Apa Tani economy and the Apa Tani evinces as much ingeniousness and persistence in pursuing every possible opportunity for a profitable trade as he has employed in developing the resources of his own country (Furer-Haimendorf, 1962 : 60).

The Apa Tani purchase slaves from the Dafla. Despite these

trade relations, it may be noted, the Apa Tani are distinct in language, dress, and manner of living from the Dafla and the Miri. Furer-Haimendorf remarks: "The Apa Tani's relations with the Dafla and Miri neighbours fluctuate between intensive trade contacts involving frequent reciprocal visits with much animated conviviality and periods of hostility punctuated by kidnappings, raids and killings" (Furer-Haimendorf, 1962 : 121).

T. C. Das (1945) in his work on the Purum provides an account of the ethnic environment of the tribe and its economic interdependence with the Meithei.

In recent years there has been a spurt of publications on the tribes of northeast India. Das Gupta (1961) shows economic, political, and socio-religious interactions of the War Khasi with the other ethnic groups of the area. Burling (1960) examines caste-like features in Garobadha region where the Garo, the Baptist Garo, the Hindu Garo, the Koch, the Warang Koch, and some other groups live. He finds that there are some restrictions regarding inter-dining which are based more on beef-eating or abstaining from it. Each tribal group is endogamous and also there are differences in language, food, and so forth, but above all there is some notion of acquiring a higher status by adopting some of the Hindu customs. This process sets the inter-relationship of the tribal people on a different note.

On the other hand, B. M. Das (1967) shows how the Assamese culture has adopted ideas, beliefs, and institutions of the surrounding Mongoloid population. He argues that there has been a mutual borrowing between the hill people and those of the valley in Assam and this was possible on account of mutual exchange of goods through barter, linguistic interaction, and interpenetration of religious ideas. Majumdar (1967) describes the social organization of the Koch of the Garo hills and their gradual merging into Hindu society. He further argues that the position of the Koch in Hindu society is not clearly defined, but they have formed a caste-like hierarchic organization among themselves and accordingly maintain distance in commensality from each other.

A Brief Historical Account of Nagaland (1970), published by the Naga Institute of Culture, is a useful work for understanding the present situation in which the Naga operate and how this situation was reached. This historical analysis shows that in Nagaland

there lived a number of different groups who had their own languages, customs, and practices and had relations of hostility and friendship with one another, but they also had economic interactions. Yet another feature of this area was the identity and solidarity of the villages which were like small republics. The village identity at times cut across the ethnic identity. The arrival of the British on the scene and their anxiety to extend political control over the area immediately around the Assam valley, and later the threat of Japanese occupation, released some forces which united the Naga and culminated in the birth of Nagaland.

R. K. Das's (1971) analysis of the situation in Manipur shows an almost opposite tendency. In Manipur there are some twenty-nine different tribal groups, but these can be classified in two major groups—the Nag and the Kuki. According in him

> In Manipur the tribals have grown more conscious of their separate identity than they were before. Today the social boundaries of the tribals are changing fast and with this there is a shift in political loyalties also (transsociation). The tribes such as the Anals, Aimols, who call themselves as Nagas, originally belong to the Kukis (R. K. Das, 1971: 152).

His views on why they should be called the Kuki are in opposition to those of Sen Gupta(1969), who thinks that there have been attempts from time to time to unify the different groups under the Chin, the Mizo-Kuki, and the like, for a separate hill state, but there are conflicts in the local power structure between the different components of the ethnic categories. These give rise to a relationship of political subordination and superordination between them. Sen Gupta has tried to show the nature of relationships among the people in Lushei-Kuki area at the political level. Shakespeare (1912) made some attempts in this direction, though his emphasis was mainly on the classification of these tribes on the basis of their cultural and linguistic similarities. According to Sen Gupta (1969) the power structure in Lushei-Kuki area has been fluid and has changed from time to time and assumed different configurations with the changing contexts. The situation changed dramatically after independence and more so after the formation of a separate Nagaland. While in Nagaland there has been some kind of a unification and also the

emergence of infranationalism (Roy Burman, 1972b), the Kuki group of tribe is divided and they are projecting an independent identity of their own.

> Day by day this process of segmentation is only increasing. But the consolidation of the authority of the nation state has its repercussion even in the hills. Conflicts of interest and antagonism are becoming more and more prominent. Out-group alienation and in-group loyalty have been exaggerated by the tribals because of lack of social balance (R. K. Das, 1971: 152, 154).

Goswami (1972), writing about the tribes of Assam, states that many of the tribes get integrated through trade centres where tribals as well as non-tribals meet. The Mizo come in contact with immigrant Santal coolies who were the first to undertake plough cultivation. While discussing kinship and marriage in the Mizo hills Goswami makes a significant point:

> Here the kinship and marriage are controlled by religion. Marriages between tribes such as Hmar and Ralte, Poi and Lusei are not uncommon. As a matter of fact, intermarriages among the tribes are not deferred, if church does not stand in their way. Sometimes church denominations of two individuals may differ and that may stand in their way. (Goswami, 1972: 276).

This process of entering into matrimonial alliances, cutting across ethnic identity, on the basis of their new religion demolishes one kind of boundary maintenance mechanism and creates others. It is obvious that people in these areas are trying to organize and project an image of themselves and their society so that their aspirations can be met; "...for emerging ethnic groups politics is the instrument of culture" (Roy Burman, 1973b).

A. P. Sinha (1972) traces the development of different political parties and the nature of tension and discontent prevailing among the major tribal groups inhabiting the hills of Assam, especially the Khasi, the Jaintia, the Garo, and the Mikir hills. According to him, it is interesting to note that the contacts between tribal groups some decades ago were almost non-existent because they

spoke languages which were mutually unintelligible but now "inter-tribal contacts" are "largely through English, broken Assamese or Hindi" (A.P. Sinha, 1972: 337). The factors of Christianizations, politicization, British policies, and new democratic institutions have released forces of alignment and interaction among the tribals in the area. Emergence of various unions like Highland Union Party and Khasi State Peoples' Union both integrate and divide tribal people in the hill areas.

Pakem (1972) offers an analysis of continuity and change among the Jaintia of Assam. He traces the various channels of communication between the different tribal groups such as markets, family or clan councils, churches, Jaintia *Durba*, and so forth, and shows how political interest groups developed from these.

Roy Burman's contributions in understanding inter-tribal relations in northeast India deserve special mention. The concept of the bridge and the buffer roles of the groups on the borders of India and other related concepts were developed by him (Roy Burman, 1966) earlier, but it is in his study *Rupa: A Sherdukpen Village in Arunachal* (Roy Burman, 1973b) that these concepts acquire a really sharp focus. He analyzes historically the nature of the relationship of the Sherdukpen of Rupa with other groups such as the Yanlak, the Khow, and the Kachari of the plains, and underlines the principles of circulation which he considers basic to the social structure of the hill tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. According to him the principle of circulation, based on reciprocity, presupposes a world view which is different from the one which is required where cash transactions are involved in a market situation. He argues that:

> ...the loosly linked up tribal entities of NEFA allowed the organised States to operate [in] their spheres of influence without directly confronting each other, and at the same time to ensure that commodity transactions from one area to another took place through diverse, but fairly stable channels. Thus it is in the interest of maintaining a larger system or systems of relationships that the tribes of NEFA remained in a state of perpetual flux in their internal relationship and were not integrated into a single polity (Roy Burman, 1973b: 9).

The Sub-Himalayan Region

This is a wide and varied area; ecologically it is extremely difficult. Population is scarce. Communication channels, whatever they are, remain closed during a good part of the winter. A majority of the people living in these areas migrate to lower ranges during winter. Ethnic composition of the people is varied. A large proportion of the people live on animal husbandry and trade. Compared to the northeastern hill areas, not much anthropological work has been done on the people of these parts. Consequently, material available on inter-tribal relations is scanty. Natural barriers isolate people living in these parts. Inter-tribal relations are extremely limited, but people do come in contact with each other for trade. The annexation of Tibet by China and the sealing of the international border has closed the old trade routes in the northern direction. Biswajit Sen (1966), in a broad sweep, describes the occupational pattern and interdependence of the people who live in Himalayan border areas from northeastern hill areas to the western Himalayas. He says that the relationship of these people with Tibet brought changes in their ethnic composition and religious and cultural life.

Central and East India

This is a large zone comprising some of the larger states like Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. The area under this zone ranges from alluvial plains to mountainous regions. There are pockets of dense forests and some of the great Indian rivers flow through this area. There are great social, cultural, and linguistic diversities. The tribal population in this zone comprises a large number of groups. The total tribal population, according to the 1971 census, is 10.8 per cent of the total population of the zone and 4.11 per cent of the total tribal population of the country. It contains the numerically strong tribes of India, namely, the Gond and the Santal; the numerical strength of the former is more than four million and that of the latter more than three million. But there are also tribal groups whose population is not more than a few hundred. There are some pockets where the tribals constitute a majority in the population.

The tribal groups in this zone represent different social and

cultural levels. They engage themselves in a variety of occupations such as forestry and food-gathering, shifting cultivation, settled agriculture, agricultural labour, animal husbandry, household industry, and miscellaneous occupations. But one major difference between the tribal situation in this zone and the other two discussed so far is that here we find association between the tribals and the Hindu peasantry. After the establishment of industrial complexes in places like Ranchi, Jamshedpur, and Rourkela, the tribals of this zone have come in contact with the heterogenous population of these industrial complexes. Even a primitive group like the Birhor, who are mainly dependent on forests, have long-standing ties with the local peasantry, and they live by exchange of commodities. Everywhere in this zone there is a network of traditional weekly markets in which the tribals participate and come in contact with different castes and communities (Surajit Sinha, 1958 : 505). Apart from the market centres, there are many other spheres in which the tribals interact with one another and with non-tribals.

These interactions have contributed to the development of social relations of varying degrees between the Hindu peasantry and the tribals. These interactions cannot be described as a case of conjunction between two historically discrete culture systems but of a single socio-cultural and historical field (Sinha, 1957b: 23). Suresh Singh (1966 : 12), in his penetrating study of Birsa and his movement in Chotanagpur, pointedly draws attention to a closely integrated pattern of life both of the tribals and the non-tribals. Virottam (1969), in his historical account of the Nagbanshi and the Chero of Ranchi and Palamau, further substantiates Sinha's observation that both for tribals and non-tribals there existed a single socio-cultural and historical field. Virottam (1969 : 197), states that Chotanagpur was invaded by Mughals at least three times during the years 1585-1707, as such "their comparative isolation provided by deep forests and mountain fastness was. . .broken by the repeated invasions of Mughals." These invasions could not subjugate the people, including the Nagbanshi and the Chero, for all time. There were periods when they paid tribute to the Mughal rulers and also periods when they openly demonstrated their hostility to them. The fluctuating interaction of the tribals with outside non-tribals and somewhat stable interactions with local peasantry

gave different historical experiences to the tribals in different areas. These influenced the future patterns of their interaction with the majority community and also their own social development. S. C. Sinha and others (1969) examine the concept of *diku* among the tribes of Chotanagpur. They observe that while the word diku generally means outsiders, it does not include the blacksmith, the barber, the Dom, and other low castes. Those who are economically higher than thet ribals are diku, a term which is more or less associated with exploiters. There are some who are more diku than others, but the Hinduized Munda do not regard the local Brahmans or Vaishnavas as diku. The Munda the Ho, the Bhumij, and the Santal provide evidence of two phases of historical experiences:

> In one, the tribes have been slowly drawn into a regional identification as peasants of a pargana through economic symbiosis with the Hindu castes and the emergence of local tribal-derived or Hindu-initiated chieftaincies and kingdoms (e.g., Ratu, Tamar, Barabhum, etc.). Identification with the Hindu world has been achieved through these stable regional capsules, with their own upper strata forming the link with the larger Hindu society beyond the region. The other model refers to a different ecological situation and historic phase in which relatively isolated tribes have been rapidly exposed to powerful immigrants who are not morally attuned to the region. This has often led to rapid economic and socio-cultural deprivation of the indigens and generated overt conflict or latent prejudice. It is not for nothing that these prejudices gained momentum precisely during the British rule, when immigrants started coming in large numbers, often dispossessing the tribals of their ancestral land, taking advantage of the contractual law introduced by the British Government (Sinha, *et al.*, 1969 : 137).

On the same theme Volchok's paper (1964) is wider in scope. She examines the interaction of the Indo-Aryan, the Dravidian, and the Mundari people. Her analysis refreshingly departs from the beaten track of showing the absorption of tribals into Hindu castes as a mode of the socio-cultural process. She observes that while many of the Dravidian and Munda tribes got permanently

transformed into Hindu castes, another process was also at work which led to caste formation within tribes. The latter situation brought forth a complicated system of social organization in which features of primitive communal society were intermingled with those of the historically younger estate and caste system (Volchok, 1964 : 108). This process led to the disintegration of the primitive communal system which was replaced by a class society among the tribals. She argues that the tribal nobility and landowners, when admitted in a class society, acquired higher status, while as a rule the rest of the tribals were admitted at the bottom. Singh (1964), incidentally, provides an illustration to Volchok's thesis. He shows that the Oraon, or their migration to the Purnea district, were confronted with the powerful Hindus and in the process adopted various Hindu religious observances. P. N. Singh (1964 : 81) shows how the landless Oraon referred to the well to do Oraon agriculturists by whom they were employed.

The penetration of the tribal people into the locally powerful Hindu society has been going on for many centuries, but the process has never been unidirectional. It has been multidirectional, with certain directions of the change being more powerful at certain times than at others. For instance, the Bhumij, who number more than half a million in Bihar and West Bengal, show a kind of oscillation. In a series of articles Sinha (1957b, 1959a, 1962) describes the nature of Bhumij-Hindu interaction and how most of them had tried to acquire Kshatriya status. He also tells us how a part of the Bhumij nobility had become accepted as Kshatriyas and had separated itself completely from Bhumij society to form a new caste. But at another time there was also a realization on the part of the Bhumij that acquiring a Kshatriya status was not the best way of social advancement. These and other works (Bailey, 1960; Martin Orans, 1965) show the various trends among the tribal people and the influences of the socio-cultural and political environment in which they live and operate. They, as mentioned earlier, show that the tribals are not all that isolable as has normally been assumed. "For centuries the ambitious tribal chieftains have taken Hindu mentors in order to gain more durable power by learning to be proper Kshatriyas" (Mandelbaum, 1970 : 597). The social advance of a tribe influences its relations with other tribals of the area.

West Bengal

We have discussed so far some general but important issues regarding the pattern of interaction between tribal people living in central and eastern India. Specific cases of inter-tribal interactions will now be discussed.

To begin with West Bengal, one finds that publications on the theme of inter-tribal relations are meagre. In Dalton's (1872) monumental work one finds useful material on inter-tribal relations. Bhowmick (1961), in his essay on artificial relationship in Midnapur, shows the different kinds of relationships entered into by people belonging to the same caste or different castes and tribes. Some of these relationships are only at the level of friendship, others like *dharma baba* and *dharma ma* go beyond. As the practice of ceremonial friendship is widespread among the tribals of central India, this aspect is discussed separately. Surajit Sinha and others (1961) provide a detailed description of agriculture, crafts, and weekly markets in south Manbhum with reference to the Bhumij. While the Bhumij have some typical cultural traits of their own, they share a common regional culture with many other castes and tribes of the area. The agricultural operations of the Bhumij bring them in contact with a number of groups. It is found that fifteen caste and tribal groups cater to the needs of sixty-two caste and tribal groups in south Manbhum (Surajit Sinha *et al.*, 1961). Sinha and others (1964) have also studied the ethnic groups in the towns and villages of Barabhum (each with an occupation), the Mahato, the Santal, and the Bhumij are numerically the largest. Both tribals and non-tribals participate in village life according to established norms. All participate in village festivals and in one of the festivals a Bhumij is the priest. In the villages several castes and tribes, engaged in different occupations, exchange their goods and services. The Bhumij are the earliest settlers, but the Brahmans regard them as belonging to a low caste. There are factional fights between different groups, but tribes side with one or the other faction according to their interests. The institution of inter-caste ceremonial *phul* friendship operates as a healer to inter-caste tensions (Surajit Sinha *et al.*, 1964 : 42). Phul friendship brings together thirty-nine different groups such as Bhumij Mahto and Moira/Mahto.

Surajit Sinha (1963) shows different levels of economic initiative among different ethnic groups of Barabhum Pargana. There is a notable correspondence between ethnic affiliation and level of economic initiative. Migrants, particularly, the Mahto cultivators are hard working, crafty, and are more inclined than the Bhumij towards cool calculations of future profit and less to the hot pursuit of pleasure. The ethic of hard work and capital gain has enabled a number of the Mahtos to acquire lands from the Bhumij despite legal safeguards. The greater income is utilized to acquire lasting symbols of rank.

> The low economic initiative of such groups as the Kharia or Pahira may be partly accounted for by their awareness of the extreme limitations in possibilities for higher achievements as a result of their inordinately low economic base. There is also the pressure from the numerically and economically dominant groups like the Bhumij and the Mahto, to keep them in a low position. In a few cases where the Kharia did clear some cultivable paddy land, the Mahto and the Bhumij took the initiative to dispossess them of the land by nominal purchase or even by unfair manipulations (Surajit Sinha, 1963 : 71).

P. K. Misra (1970) observes a similar phenomenon of differential economic initiative among the Jenu Kuruba and Betta Kuruba of Karnataka. He goes on to examine the factor underlying this differential. Bannerji (1962) discusses the socio-ritual status of the Kharia in the ethnic background of Manbhum. The Kharia are one of the most backward tribes of West Bengal and have played a subordinate role to the Bhumij landlords. But they too, along with the Mahto, have developed the aspiration to enter the Hindu fold. In turn the Kharia have attempted to approximate to the cultural tradition of the Bhumij.

Bihar

Bihar's tribal population is nearly 8.8 per cent of the population of the state. A considerable volume of literature exists on Bihar tribes who can claim the largest number of full-length monographs on them. But inter-tribal relations have received little attention

in these studies. Roy (1912, 1915b, 1925b, 1937), Majumdar (1950), Datta Majumdar (1956), and scores of others have dealt with the tribal groups as isolates.

S. C. Roy (1915) mentions that in Oraon villages, besides Hindu castes, several other tribes like the Munda, the Kharia, the Korwa, and the Asur also live. The Munda and the Kharia had the same standing as the Oraon. There was exchange of services and goods among the people forming the village community. According to Roy (1915 : 69) castes and tribes whose services were indispensable to the Oraons formed component parts of the typical village community in the Oraon country. Such castes and tribes are the Ahir, the Lohar, the Gorait, the Ghasi, the Mahali, the Kamar, and the Jolha.

D. P. Sinha has tried to present the structural features of tribal villages as contrasted with the Hindu villages. He shows that in the tribal villages also there are several social groups, but he argues that in tribal villages there is absence of vertical interaction. The social interaction among the communities rests on functional interdependence. He finds that the concept of dominant caste is insignificant in the case of a tribal village because of the absence of social structure based on inequality (D.P. Sinha, 1961 : 65-74). This argument of Sinha, however, is debatable. In his admirable study of an inter-tribal market, D. P. Sinha, (1968) demonstrates the long-range interdependence of the tribals in Chotanagpur. He comments that the ethnographic studies of Chotanagpur have by and large overemphasized the isolation of tribal communities and underemphasized the interrelationship among various tribes. In his study he shows that a market in a tribal setting provides a meeting place for economic and cultural specialists of different tribes and functions as a centre not only of economic but also of social, religious, and political activities in the region. A market is also a powerful source of change. The market has definite links with the hinterland. The hinterland comprises two distinct ecological zones: the hills and the plateau; and the valley, which Sinha calls ecological margins and ecological centres. He finds a distinct pattern of relationship between climate, flora and fauna, and human beings in the ecological margins in the ecological centre. He observes, "Inter-tribal contacts are more frequent among the people of the valley than between those who live in the hills

and plateaus" (D.P. Sinha, 1968 : 30). Sachchidanand (1968) deals with six different tribes—the Munda, the Santal, the Kharia, the Ho, the Oraon, and the Sauria Paharia. He contrasts a tribal village with a non-tribal village and shows the functional relationship between different communities including castes in the former. Mukherjee and others (1973) describe the Chero of Palamau. The Chero live in multi-ethnic settlements and interact with the other tribes and castes of their village and of the adjoining areas. The authors, however, have mainly reported the economic interactions.

There have been several tribal movements, tribal rebellions, and efforts to organize the tribes of Chotanagpur at various times. The great Santal rebellion of 1815-57, an uprising which is well remembered by the Santal, has been a point of departure for several writings on the later movements among the tribes of Chotanagpur (O'Malley, 1941; Culshaw, 1949, 1945; Datta, 1940; Orans, 1959, 1965). The rebellion was an effort to undo the steady loss of land to non-tribal immigrants. The memory of the rebellion instils courage and unity in the tribe, and deepens the Santal feelings of separatism. Their participation in the new cult, efforts to gain a higher status through new symbols, and rallying behind a pan-tribal movement like that of the Jharkhand Party, provide a perspective to understand the tribal convulsions in this area (Orans, 1959).

Jyoti Sen (1966, 1967, 1972) analyzes the transformation in tribal Bihar. She examine. various movements and their influences on the tribes—Hinduization, through Vaishnava preceptors; messianic or millenarian movements; reformatory sects like Bhakti, Tana Bhagat and Kabir Panthi; and Christian movements. She observes that after the Government of India Act of 1935 (for creation of special constituencies), the tribes increasingly became conscious of their tribal identity. This led to the emergence of a new tribal solidarity, which was accentuated further after independence. The successive elections for positions in the state and the central political arena have released cross-currents which, on the one hand, encouraged tribals to organize themselves across ethnic identity and, on the other, to reinforce ethnic solidarity (Sen, 166; Martin Orans, 1965). Jyoti Sen observes that sometimes people are divided on account of their religious identity or association with one or the other Christian

denomination. The situation is fluid because there is competition for power between tribe and tribe and between the members of the same tribe.

Sachchidananda (1954, 1959) analyzes the impact of Birsa Munda and his movement and the new political consciousness in tribal Bihar. These writings read along with Suresh Singh's historical account of Birsa Munda and his movement (1966) help in understanding the struggle of the tribal people. Sachchidananda (1972b) deals on a broad canvas with the problems of the tribals in Bihar. He remarks that as in tribal areas of other parts of India, Chotanagpur is also seething with discontent. There are many causes for this discontent. Because of the process of modernization, rising expectations, and growth of education, a middle class has emerged among the tribals. This class is the most vocal and articulate. Its demand for a separate state of Jharkhand is the rallying cry for tribals of different groups to voice their political opinion.

Vidyarthi (1969), in his massive work, provides ample data to understand the cultural configuration of Ranchi. Ranchi, principally a town inhabited by tribals, gradually grew into a cosmopolitan city. One-fourth of the present population of Ranchi is of tribal migrants. In the tribal localities of the city traditional leadership is still maintained though there is a progressive decline in tribal beliefs. There are many tribal festivals which are celebrated exclusively by the tribals. The traditional leadership, however, has failed to provide effective political leadership. The educated tribals appear to be more secularized. Vidyarthi tells us that in the last fifty years, the leadership of the tribals has gone into the hands of educated Christians. He gives an historical sequence of how a Christian students union ultimately developed into the Jharkhand Party, when its membership was thrown open to non-adivasi members. Christian leaders, however, continue to enjoy popularity. In a changed locale like that of Ranchi, the pattern of inter-tribal interaction cannot be the same as it is in the tribal villages. Further, the impact of urbanization, education, Christianity, old prejudices, new issues, rising tribal aspirations, and democratic party politics have given rise to new patterns of inter-tribal interaction. Vidyarthi (1969 : 197) throws new light on some of the issues emerging out of these processes.

Orissa

The tribal population of Orissa is 23.1 per cent of the total population of the state. Studies on inter-tribal interaction among Orissa tribals are not many. Thusu and Jha (1972), while dealing with Ollar Gadba, describe the weekly market and the communities which participate in the market and the commodities they exchange.

Madhya Pradesh

Like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh has some pockets where the tribal population is concentrated. The tribal population in Madhya Pradesh is 20 per cent of the total population of the state. Madhya Pradesh has also attracted the attention of anthropologists and a number of publications on the tribes of this state are available. One would notice that the coverage of the tribal movements here, in contrast to Bihar, is much less or almost non-existent. It is true that tribal movements in this area have been fewer compared to Bihar. This observation is significant for correlating time and space perspectives in the development of regional culture and tribal movements in an area (Surajit Sinha, 1972).

Elwin (1939, 1942, 1947, 1955, 1968) has contributed a number of monographs on the tribes of Madhya Pradesh, but in his writings little material is available on inter-tribal relations. Shamrao Hivale (1946) has given a detailed description of the relations among the Pardhan and the Gond. The Pardhan are the official genealogists to the Gond, their women act as midwives to the Gond and also tattoo Gond girls. The Pardhan are dependent upon the Gond, but the visit of a Pardhan to his patron's house is an occasion for rejoicing, for recollecting the events of the intervening period since his last visit, recording of births, and so forth. The Pardhan love music, poetry, and romance. They regale their patrons with ready wit and music. The Gond considers the Pradhan both his equal and his inferior.

Fuchs (1960) observes a similar bilateral relationship between the Gond and the Bhumia. The Bhumia, a sub-tribe of the Baiga, always live in close proximity of the Gond but in separate settlement. The Gond parts of the settlements, however, always appear to be more prosperous. There is considerable intercommunica-

tion between the two communities. "The numerical preponderance of the Gond coupled with greater wealth and higher social prestige, naturally led to a high degree of economic and cultural dependency of the Baiga on the Gond" (Fuchs, 1960 : 8). Until very recently, the Gond freely admitted the Baiga and Ahir girls into their community, while they were always reluctant to give their own daughters to men of these tribes. The Gond now refuse to eat and smoke with the Bhumia. The latter retaliate by refusing them the same privilege in their houses. The Bhumia, like the Gond, employ the Pardhan as genealogists. Fuchs reports that around 1940 a union of the Gond of central India was formed, not for social or economic betterment but for the preservation of their ritualistic purity. It started its activity by breaking all social contacts with those whom they thought were lower than themselves, such as the Baiga and the Panka (Fuchs, 1960 : 188). Until this agitation for upward mobility in the Hindu caste model arose, the Bhumia and the Gond had friendly terms among themselves. Usually the village headman used to be a Gond, the village watchman a Panka, and the *dewar* (official priest) a Bhumia. The Ahir were the village herdsmen, the Agaria did the smithy work in return for traditional payment, and the Pardhan were the bards and genealogists. Fuchs draws attention to one of the processes for social advance adopted by tribes—emulation of the caste model, acceptance of the ideas of high and low status and of the concept of pure and impure. The Gond consider themselves Kshatriya and, being in a dominant position, regulate their interaction accordingly with other groups. It is interesting to note that in this tribe-dominated area some of the Hindu castes get a lower status. The Ahir are considered to be lower than the Gond and the Bhumia.

Some of these issues come into sharp focus in Edward Jay's study of a tribal village (1970). He observes that the Hill Maria live in single ethnic villages. The neighbouring villages too are those of the Hill Maria. This limits their interaction with other groups. The Hill Maria interact with other groups in market places and fairs and have economic relationships with artisan castes of the area. Jay makes a significant observation that the relative position of the Hill Maria is to be seen in association with castes and not among the tribes only.

> When considering the Hill Maria in relation to other peoples and tribes we must consider them as a caste. This is so because they are recognized by the surrounding peoples as a distinct group with a place in the regional caste hierarchy. Similarly, they consider themselves to be a caste, as well as a tribe, in the sense that they understand their own hierarchic position and have views about the relative positions of other castes in the hierarchy (Jay, 1970 : 84).

The Hill Maria conceptualize of other castes as big or small and for themselves they think that they are big but not so big as the Hindus and others, and consider other Gond as equals. Jay finds that

> ...daily interactions between these castes are relaxed, informal and unstructured, just as they are between the members of the same caste. Only at ceremonies can the distinctions be noted. Whenever there is a village feast the Distillers take a portion of the sacrificial food and cook it separately (Jay, 1970 : 91).

The Hill Maria are aware that big castes do not accept food from them because they eat beef. Beef-eating as a determinant of one's position in the local hierarchy appears to be an all-India phenomenon. However, the Hill Maria are neither particularly worried about their low status nor particularly anxious to raise it, but, paradoxically, they are concerned about pollution. Jay tells us that around 1850 the Maharaja of Bastar decreed that all members of the Bhatra, the Dakar, and the Sundi castes shall have the right to wear the sacred thread—an official recognition of their status. Nothing comparable happened to the tribes.

Thusu (1959, 1965a, 1965b) delineates the relationship of the Dhurwa with other groups of Bastar. Some of the young Dhurwa men have interesting fictive kinship ties and ritual friendship with the Bison Horn Maria living in adjoining villages. They stay for the night in the houses of their respective friends when they are on their way to attend the weekly market. Similarly, the Bison Horn Maria stay in the houses of their respective Dhurwa friends when they are on their way to attend another weekly market. During their stay they are provided food by

their hosts. Such friends invite each other for marriage and death ceremonies. Some other groups live in Dhurwa villages. The Dhurwa have functional relationships with them. Thusu describes the situations under which the Dhurwa come into contact with other ethnic groups. He states that in the village panchayat of the Dhurwa, there are members of other ethnic groups also. In the Dhurwa panchayats, cases of accepting food and entering into matrimonial alliances with members of lower groups are also discussed. Harvesting rituals bring the Dhurwa into contact with the members of other ethnic groups. In Dhurwa marriages others are invited, but they are served food according to their ritual status. The notions of ritual purity and pollution are present among the Dhurwa. Ethnic groups are ranked high or low according to their accepted status and this regulates their acceptance or rejection of food. The fifteen groups with whom the Dhurwa come into contact are rated accordingly. Beef-eating puts a group into the lowest category.

The Dorla, another major tribal group in Bastar, have been described by Hajra (1959, 1970). The Dorla live in the southernmost part of Bastar. Their immediate neighbours in the south are the Koya and the Hill Reddi and in the north and northwest are the Bison Horn Maria and the Hill Maria. The main centre where the Dorla meet the Maria and various other tribal and non-tribal groups is the weekly market. The Dorla have functional relations with various tribal and non-tribal groups. They obtain baskets and highly valued Bison horns from the Hill Reddi of Andhra. Dussera is the most important festival of the erstwhile state of Bastar which integrates the roles of different tribal groups.

Like the Hill Maria, the Dhurwa and the Dorla are also not directly involved in any conscious movement to raise their social status in relation to their neighbours. But as observed by Jay (1970) and Thusu (1965a, 1965b) it is clear that there has emerged a regional pattern of interaction among the ethnic groups. This is very much influenced by the ideas of purity and pollution and the hierarchy of caste system.

In his paper, Pandey (1962) describes the interaction of tribes and castes in a Bastar village. He has examined the interaction of different groups in informal and formal situations such as sitting and gossiping, playing games, dancing and singing, friendly

meetings, story-telling, participation in rites connected with the crises of life, and quarrels and conflicts. For instance, he describes who can sit where and how while gossiping. He goes on to say how members of one group greet others and who can enter whose house.

Danda (1971b) analyzes the economic relationships that regulate the allocation mechanism of five scheduled tribes of Chhattisgarh, namely, the Kawar, the Kodaku, the Korwa, the Nagesia, and the Pardhan. Representatives of various tribes occupy distinct territories of the region and follow economic pursuits that are mostly controlled by the physical environment of the respective tribes. Though there is no surplus for distribution, transaction of agricultural and other produce still takes place, most of which is either distress or predetermined sale or obligatory requital. The flow of production is regulated through a complex network of economic relationship involving different tribal groups and non-tribals. Danda analyzes various sets of economic relationships.

Andhra Pradesh

The tribal population of Andhra Pradesh is 3.8 per cent of the total population of the state. The three important monographs of Furer-Haimendorf (1943, 1945, 1948) on the Chenchu, the Reddi, and the Raj Gond provide a wealth of information on inter-tribal relationships in Andhra Pradesh. The relations of the Hill Reddi with the neighbouring tribes, namely, the Koya and the Kammar, are harmonious and complementary. The Reddi make baskets which they trade with the Koya. Some of the Koya work as blacksmiths. The Reddi consider themselves superior in the caste system, because of their "...compliance with the Hindu prejudice against eating beef and the Koya's reluctance to desist from sacrificing bulls at their funeral feasts and from enjoying their flesh" (Furer-Haimendorf, 1945 : 241). Both the Reddi and the Koya consider the Kammar inferior. Furer-Haimendorf also discusses the place of the Reddi among the tribes of the Eastern Ghats.

Furer-Haimendorf (1948) gives a detailed account of the tribal groups living in Gond villages of Adilabad district and the kind of interaction they have with the Gond. He tells us that despite

the difference in language and also in economic status between them, the Kolam and the Gond consider themselves as related communities. The Kolam are comparatively recent settlers in the Gond villages. Sharing the same ecological setting is another group called the Naikpod, who consider themselves superior to both the Kolam and the Gond because they abstain from eating beef and pork. The Gond have their hereditary bards in the Pardhan. Their presence in many Gond religious rites as musicians is obligatory. Furer-Haimendorf (1948 : 47) states, "As bards and guardians of tradition the Pardhans play a vital role in Gond culture and I have often noticed that where the Pardhan discard their fiddle and abandon their ancient association with Gonds, their own as well as their former patrons' cultural life suffers the loss of a vital element." The language of the Pardhan in Adilabad is Marathi, but "indeed Gondi is the language of the epics and hymns which they sing at feasts and for the entertainment of Gond audiences and we have here the unusual case of artists whose main medium of artistic expression is a language other than their present mother tongue" (Furer-Haimendorf, 1948 : 48). The Pardhan are entitled to certain traditional gifts from their patrons along with a share in the movable property left by any member of the patron's family. Another community in the area, called the Toti, also perform almost the same role as that of the Pardhan to some clans of the Gond. The Toti, however, are Telugu-speakers. Furer-Haimendorf describes the relationship of the Gond with blacksmiths, brass founders, the Maratha and Telugu castes living in their neighbourhood, and also the nomadic tribes like the Banjara (cattle-breeders and transporters of goods), the Lambhani (cattle-breeders *par excellence*), the Mathura, and the Wanjari. He (1948) gives a rounded picture of the role of the various tribal and non-tribal groups in the life of the Raj Gond whose villages are ordinarily tucked away in secluded areas.

Murthy (1972 : 179) discusses the relative positions of the various sub-tribes of the Koya. He also shows how the concept of pollution and commensality works and what sort of stratification prevails.

Western India

The westernmost part of this zone is physically far different

from its eastern parts. In the western arid areas the population is sparse. Of the total population of Gujarat and Rajasthan, 14.0 per cent and 12.1 per cent respectively are tribals. The tribal population in Maharashtra is 5.9 per cent of the total population of the state. One of the most populous tribes, the Bhil, are found in this zone.

The published material on tribes of this zone is meagre and it does not contain much information on inter-tribal relations. Though only of marginal interest to us here, Brij Raj Chauhan's (1970) study of towns in the tribal setting may be referred to. The study, in its own right, is interesting and novel to the tribal literature on India and is relevant for our purpose to the extent that it shows the interactions of tribals in an urban society.

South India

Tribal population in this zone is rather thin; it is only 0.9 per cent of the total population of the zone.

Anthropologically this area is poorly covered. There are only a few full-length monographs on the tribes of this zone, though some of the tribal groups like the Toda and the Kota have attracted the attention of social scientists the world over. It is true, though it appears to be an enigma, that in this zone there is not a single tribal pocket comparable to that of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh or Chotanagpur in Bihar, yet it contains a number of tribes who mainly live by food-gathering and who can be described as some of the most primitive in the world. These food-gatherers live in close proximity to the peasants who have a long tradition of farming. This situation calls for a detailed historical analysis. However, the most popular paper on inter-tribal relations, which has been cited in ever so many articles, monographs and textbooks the world over, has come from this zone. This is Mandelbaum's paper (1941 : 43) on culture change among the Nilgiri tribes.

The Nilgiri hills have remained isolated for centuries and the autochthonous population did not come close to the Hindus. But the Nilgiri folks lived in economic and social symbiosis; the Toda as pastoralists, the Badaga as agriculturists, the Kota as artisans, and the Kurumba as food-gatherers and sorcerers. However, with the march of civilization, this symbiosis does not

exist any longer. At the cultural level some give and take continues, but it is very little. The four tribes lived in close and constant contact with one another, yet culturally and linguistically they were separate. Any village of one tribe was and still continues to be within a short distance of the others, but the culture of a particular tribe has little in common with that of others. The complex Toda ritual and social organization had only vague parallels in Kota life. The similarity between the Kota and the Badaga did not go beyond dress and housing. Both the Kota and the Badaga admired and respected the Toda, but despite the high prestige rating of the Toda, the others took over very few Toda traits (Mandelbaum, 1941: 19).

Mandelbaum tries to explain why there was so little diffusion of traits among the tribes. Each group had a different focus of attention to which others contributed little. The life of the Toda revolved around the buffaloes, the life of the Kota around religion and smithy, the life of the Badaga around crops, and that of the Kurumba around sorcery. But social intercourse between the groups was important. Though both the Kota and the Badaga called the Kurumba to their villages, all transactions with the latter were done outside the villages. In like manner the Kota musicians were present at all major Toda ceremonies, but if their band went too close to a Toda dairy the place was polluted and could be resanctified only by elaborate rituals. Thus, "although contact was frequent, social intercourse was confined to a fixed number of narrowly defined activities. Any intimate contact of a kind which would allow members of one group to mingle freely with another, was stringently tabooed" (Mandelbaum, 1941: 20). Further, a bar to the inter-tribal diffusion was placed also on account of prestige associated with various symbols attached to the different tribes. Mandelbaum also discusses several aspects of change and shows why the Kota have been more susceptible to change than the Toda, but have not yielded as much as the Badaga who have gone much nearer to the Hindus. Mandelbaum's arguments and their further elaborations get reflected in his other writings on the Nilgiris (Mandelbaum, 1955b, 1960, 1970).

At another place Mandelbaum (1956: 600) writes, that the old order of the Nilgiri tribe was, in effect, a caste order that was carried on in isolation from centres and carriers of Indian

civilization. There was no knowledge of scripture to bolster it, no Brahmans to legitimize it, no Kshatriyas to rule over it. Yet the social order functioned well for centuries.

Rivers (1906) was the first anthropologist to report the relationship between the five tribes of the Nilgiris—the Toda, the Badaga, the Kota, the Kurumba, and the Irula. The Nilgiri tribes, especially their inter-relations and the changes in their culture, have attracted the attention of a number of writers like Emeneau (1938) and Hockings (1965). Hockings (1968) poses the question whether the Badaga are a tribe or a caste. He argues that the society in the Nilgiris is a caste society. The Kota, the Toda, the Kurumba, and the Badaga are linked into a larger unit by a pattern of standardized relations. An observation like this has been made by several authors for different tribal areas (Jay, 1970; Rajalakshmi Misra, 1972). Verghese (1966) discusses interaction of the Badaga, the Toda, and the Kota with reference to the sorcery of the Kurumba. He also describes the legend according to which the Kota, the Toda, and the Kurumba were brothers but later on each group became independent. The Kurumba acquired magical powers of destruction, but the Kota and the Toda, after appealing to their respective gods, acquired powers to curtail the harmful effects of Kurumba sorcery. He describes the effect of Kurumba sorcery on the life of the Kota. He also gives some idea of the social hierarchy among the Kota and the Kurumba in relation to the Badaga and how this hierarchy has been changing in the recent years. Once again we notice that beef consumption is a determinant of a group's status in the regional hierarchy—a common factor from the northeast hill areas to the extreme south.

Ehrenfels (1952), in his monograph on the Kadar, states that he gave up the idea of writing a chapter on the neighbours of the Kadar as he could not find any traces of inter-tribal contact. A similar position is found among other food-gathering tribes of south India like the Jenu Kuruba (P. K. Misra, 1969) and Soliga (Morab, 1970) in Karnataka. Thus, it may be said that those who practise a food-gathering economy, which is the earliest form of food procurement, display the least contact with the neighbouring population.

Rajalakshmi Misra (1972) examines the relationship of five tribes—the Chetty, the Mullukurumba, the Uralikurumba, the

Kattu Naicken, and the Panyan—in a settlement situated on the western slopes of the Nilgiris near the Kerala border. She examines the myths of origin of the tribes, their economic status in terms of landholdings, their economic activities, the services they receive from others and the services they offer to others in day to day life and on ceremonial occasions, their commensal relations and ideas of pollution, and the maintenance of social distance from each other.

She also describes the way they address each other and the ritual roles assigned to each. All these show the existence of a social hierarchy. All the tribals in the area appear to be interlinked into a larger unit by a pattern of standardized relation. She observes that the tribes living in Erumad village are not just isolated groups but they are a part of the tribal system. They interact with each other. Every sphere of their interaction reveals a particular hierarchic order as found among the castes. She further observes that the process of social mobility as noted among the tribes of Erumad is not much different from that found among the caste Hindus and that criteria which show the status of a caste in a caste society are also applicable among the tribes in Erumad.

Andaman Islands

A brief mention may be made of the tribal population of the Andaman and Nicobar group of islands whose tribal population is 15.7 per cent of the total population of the islands. On account of the geographical features and peculiar history of these islands, their tribal groups have remained isolated from each other and also generally from the rest of the population. The information on the people living in these islands continues to be extremely scarce. Radcliffe-Brown's study (1948) on Andaman islanders remains a major contribution. Cipriani's travelogue (1966) gives us some idea of the tribal situation in the islands. But it is Mann (1973) who tried to explore and analyze the nature of relationships between the Jarwa, the Onges, the Andamanese, and other tribals in the islands. A patterned hostility could be considered as a form of interaction among these. According to him, "it has been reported by more than one person that there existed an inter-tribal hostility in the Andaman islands. The great

Andamanese and Onge-Jarwa groups were mutually hostile. Conflicts did occur on the violations of territorial boundaries" (R. S. Mann, 1973 : 205).

Ritual Friendship

The practice of establishing ritual friendship or fictive kinship ties between individuals belonging to one ethnic group or different ethnic groups is found among many tribes and castes of India. The process of establishing such ties, and the mutual obligations of the partners are different for different categories of ties. Archer (1947 : 16) has reported ritual friendship in Santal society. Dube (1949) provides an interesting description of ritual friendship among the tribal and non-tribal people in Chhattisgarh. Ceremonial friendship as contacted by some of the groups in Bengal and Orissa has been referred to by Dalton (1872). S. C. Roy (1937 : 161) describes it in his monograph on the Kharia. In his monograph on Birhor, the friendship ties which Roy (1925 : 527-533) mentions are contacted only between the members of the same group. Elwin (1939, 1947, 1950) discusses it in his monographs on the Baiga, the Muria, and the Bondo highlanders. One of the ceremonial friendships the Bondo enter into is called Mahaprasad, which is a very serious relationship and calls for a number of mutual obligations. Bandopadhya (1955) discusses ceremonial friendship among the Bhnmij. Tandon (1960) gives a comprehensive coverage to the ceremonial friendships among the Bhatra of Bastar. He discusses the various types of serious and light friendships contacted by the Bhatra. The ceremonial friendship may play a functional role also as between the Bison Horn Maria and the Dhurwa (Thusu, 1959). Though the ceremonial friendship is unstructured and unpredictable, the ties, once established, are as stable as kinship ties, or even more. Since friendship ties are contacted at the individual level they are unfettered by group dynamics and sometimes relieve inter-ethnic tensions. The widespread practice of ceremonial friendships shows the urge of human beings to reach beyond the narrow boundaries of ethnic identity.

Some General Issues

A brief mention of the literature which takes up issues which

go beyond the traditional economic, social, cultural, ritual, and political interaction between tribes may be made here. Such literature, generally speaking, has started finding its place in anthropological studies recently. Anthropology has been growing out of the shackles of its traditional subject matter and the import of the issues which now find place in anthropology has much wider implications than hitherto realized. Further, the emergent dynamic socio-political and economic situation has generated new forces which call for different patterns of alignments between the tribal groups to strengthen or to neutralize a cause.

Mahapatra (1972) gives an excellent summation and analysis of different kinds of movements among the tribals of India. In some of the current movements, like the one among the Warli in western India, the Kond in Koraput, the Saora and other tribal groups in Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh, and Naxalbari tribesmen have taken the extreme step of taking arms under communist leadership in an effort to link their movement with other have nots of India and even with the world's proletariat (Mahapatra, 1972 : 407). At another place Mahapatra (1972 : 408) observes, "To the extent the Naga, the Garo, the Khasi and other hill tribes forge a link among themselves and with the rest of the tribal population of India, there is the prospect of a Pan-Indian tribal movement, however, heterogenous or tenuous it may be." In a well written and perceptive paper, Surajit Sinha (1972) reviews the tribal solidarity movements in India. His main concern is with self-conscious socio-political movements aimed at asserting political solidarity of a tribe or of a group of tribes vis-a-vis the non-tribals. He classifies the various tribal solidarity movements in time and space and discusses the models of Bose (1967), Roy Burman (1972b), and Orans (1965), which attempt to explain the various tribal movements. His objective categorization of the movements which explain the nature, degree, and intensity of the involvement of the tribal groups should be extremely helpful to the planners of tribal policy in India.

This survey may be concluded by a few general remarks. The approach that the tribals can be isolated from the rest of the neighbouring population is dated. It has been seen that it is not fully applicable even in the case of the tribals of Andaman

islands. Wherever efforts to explore the inter-ethnic relations have been made it has been noticed that there emerges a regional pattern of structured relations, be it in far off corners of India like the northeastern hill areas, inaccessible hills and forests of central India, or the remote Nilgiri hills. These regional patterns show various points of articulation with Indian civilization, particularly the caste system.

All over India consuming of beef is considered to be defiling, but that does not necessarily mean that status-raising symbols are abruptly adopted by the people; for the status-raising process is not merely grabbing status-raising symbols. Further, the analysis shows the emergence of an elite in nearly all the tribal areas. These elites are different from the traditional leaders in several respects, the major difference being their alienation from their own groups. The historical experience of interaction before them is of the caste and class models which they try to operate alternatively or simultaneously in a complementary manner for their social advance. But it appears that in some of the areas the tribals have consciously rejected both these models. How far and how long remains to be seen.

BINOD C. AGRAWAL

Interaction Between Tribes and non-Tribes

IN contemporary anthropology there has been a meaningful debate on the question whether to use "native" categories or "objective" (universal anthropological) categories for description and analysis. The implications of utilizing native categories for description and analysis lie at the conceptual as well as the methodological level. The two approaches also lead to two different kinds of results that one obtains from the same material. In this essay I will use the emic (native) categories instead of the etic (objective) categories.

A second important problem in this context is that of definition. Wherever possible, to minimize confusion, operational definitions of the concepts used have been provided. The tribes have been viewed as a part of the larger political system of India. Within this political system the tribes enjoy certain special privileges. In this sense, the tribes constitute a separate category within India at the political level. At the civilizational level, however, they form many separate entities in a larger spatial mosaic. At times, tribes are so large in population (e. g. the Gond and the Bhil) that for all practical purposes they remain a visibly distinct entity. Whereas some, who are numerically small (like the Gujjar and the Khasi), provide an overlapping spectrum in the civilizational spatial mosaic. These two levels of realities—the political and the civilizational—will be kept in mind while analyzing the data.

Third, the temporal association of various tribes within the Indian civilization for a very extended period is equally important. The contact period goes beyond known history. The safest conclusion that can be drawn from this fact is that it has allowed the Indian civilization to develop multiple traditions instead of

a single tradition. The interaction of tribes and non-tribes in India can be examined with these perspectives in mind.

The terms tribe or tribal may have different meanings even for anthropologists. In the past, leaving aside the historical reasons why and how, a section of India's population was classified under the category tribe. After independence, they were redesignated as scheduled tribes or commonly called adivasi. However, the concept of scheduled tribe or adivasi, as conceived by the Indian administrators, continued to differ from that of anthropologists (Naik, 1968 : 84-97). Today, anthropologists and administrators use the same definition and refer to the list of scheduled tribes for the purpose of recognizing a tribe. For the non-tribes a tribe does not exist as a single cultural entity, rather the tribes are a generalized category different from them within Indian civilization. For example, in the districts of Dhar, Ratlam, and Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh the referent of the tribe is adivasi in a plural sense. When asked about the Bhil they are referred to as adivasi. But twenty years ago they were known only as Bhil. Such changes in identification have certain socio-political implications as even a tribe like the Bhil would now describe itself as adivasi. A similar phenomenon exists in other parts of India also, except in those places where the tribes are settled agriculturists and live next to the non-tribes, as in Orissa. But even there they are recognized now as a separate category for the purpose of the special privileges guaranteed in the constitution. In this essay all names included in the list of scheduled tribes are treated as separate tribes.

According to the list of scheduled tribes, there are more than four hundred tribes and sub-tribes living in various parts of India. The term sub-tribes refers to those who formed part of a larger tribe but are recognized now as separate tribes. The tribes constitute 6.8 per cent of the total population of India (Roy Burman, 1972b : 39). The Gond, living in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh, are among the most populous tribes. They number a little over four million people. The Bhil are of the same strength and are distributed in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Maharashtra. The Santal, living in Bihar, Orissa, and West Bengal, are the third most populous tribe, numbering more than three million. The smallest tribe "which is receiving considerable attention at the

national level, is the Andamanese, with the strength of only 19" (Roy Burman, 1972b : 39).

In spatial terms, various tribes are widely dispersed. In 287 tahsil/talukas the tribes command numerical dominance. The level of formal education among them differs widely. For example, Malapantaram and Sulung have almost no formal education, whereas 40 per cent of the Lushei are formally educated. These two points are important for the understanding of the process of interaction between the tribes and the non-tribal groups.

Within the framework of the present discussion, anyone who does not fall in the category of scheduled tribes would automatically fall in the category of non-tribes. Applying this criterion, the remaining 93.22 per cent population, according to the census of India (1961), are non-tribes. In other words, for every one belonging to a tribe there are fourteen who belong to non-tribal communities. In demographic terms, the tribes are outnumbered by non-tribes, a fact which has observable influences on the kind and level of interaction between them.

At another level, when we consider a tribe as a separate cultural entity, the tribe living next to it may be treated as a non-tribe for the first one. For example, for a Santal a Munda is as much a non-tribe as a Brahman. Similarly, for a Bhil a Bhilala is as much a non-tribe as a *darji* (tailor) or a *dhobi* (washerman) living in the same village. This point is quite important in the present context for the understanding of the process of interaction.

THE CONCEPT OF INTERACTION

Among anthropologists, Oliver (as referred by Romney, 1961: 223) has discussed the concept of interaction in detail. According to Oliver:

> All interactions may be viewed as having duration and discernible sequence of action, and it can always be described in terms of the spatial arrangement between the interactors. Also, native terms of reference, if not of address, usually exist to describe the interactors' roles in the events under consideration. Moreover, it is probably rare for emotion to be entirely absent in interaction; on the other hand, transactions, as we

define this dimension of interaction, do not necessarily accompany all interactions (quoted by Romney, 1961: 223).

Oliver refers to three types of interactions—normative, historical, and suppositional. He further categorizes the details of other interactional dimensions like durational, sequential, spatial, transactional, emotional, and terminological. Romney (1961: 244) thinks that Oliver defined social structure in interactional terms and used etic categories rather than emic categories for the analysis of interaction.

The concept of interaction has been viewed in other ways too. At the dyadic level, it can be viewed as an interactive situation between individuals when they influence one another. At the inter-cultural level one can conceive of interactive situations between cultures when they influence each other. As early as 1936, this process was described as "acculturation." Acculturation included "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent change in the original cultural pattern of either or both groups" (Redfield *et al.*, 1936 : 194).

There is a functional aspect of interaction between cultures and individuals. In the present context it simply means that there are reasons or motivations why individuals and cultures would like to interact with one another.

Social psychologists have discussed interaction under the heading of "symbolic interactionism." According to Blumer:

> The term 'symbolic interactionism' has come into use as a label for a relatively distinctive approach to the study of human group life and human conduct. The scholars who have used the approach or contributed to its intellectual foundations are many, and include such notable American figures as George Herbert Mead, John Dewey, W. I. Thomas, Robert E. Park, William James, Charles Horton Cooley, Florian Znaniecki, James Mark Baldwin, Robert Redfield and Louis Wirth. Despite significant differences in the thought of such scholars, there is a great similarity in the general way in which they viewed and studied human group life (Blumer, 1969 :1).

Symbolic interactionism rests on three simple premises: Human

beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings the things have for them; the meaning of such things is derived from or arises out of the social interaction one has with one's fellows; and these meanings are handled in and modified through one interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters (Blumer, 1969 : 2). For the understanding of any interaction process, the concept of symbolic interactionism has relevance mostly at the individual or at the intra-cultural level.

Based on the above discussion, interaction may be conceived as a socio-cultural process in which demographic, spatial, temporal, psychological, and functional factors act as intervening variables in any interactive situation. In demographic terms, if the numerical strength of the tribes is smaller than that of non-tribes the pattern of interaction would have been different if it were the other way round. In spatial terms, the rate of interaction between closely situated tribes and non-tribes would be higher than for those far away from each other. The temporal factors seem very important in any interactive situation as they determine the continuity of relationship between the tribes and non-tribes. For example, the Bhil, near Badnawar town in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh, have been interacting for many centuries of known history with the neighbouring Hindus. The pattern of their relationships is quite different from that obtaining between the Bhil of Jhabua district and their non-tribal neighbours. All these interactive situations generally lead to cooperation, competition, and conflict. The close economic linkage between tribes and non-tribes like the Santal agricultural labour and Hindu landlords in Bihar is a good example of agricultural cooperation. In the major industrial belts of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Orissa, one observes, competition for jobs between the local tribes and migrant non-tribe Hindus. Such conflict is also seen in many other parts of India.

The resultant effect of these interactions between tribes and non-tribes may be understood in terms of acculturation, assimilation, and integration. Acculturation has been conceived as a process of subsequent change in the original cultural patterns of either tribes or both tribes and non-tribes. The process of assimilation has been viewed in terms of loss of identification and cultural identity on the part of the numerically smaller

tribes who become a part of the non-tribe Indian civilization. Integration has been viewed as a continuing process of mutual give and take between tribes and non-tribes. It essentially denotes an historical acceptance of the cultural differences and tolerence of each other. It is worth noting that in the process of integration, tribes do not loose their identity and continue to maintain many of their cultural traditions.

Some Recent Researches

In the context of India, the only full-length study on interaction is that of Prasad (1974). He has studied three tribes of Bihar living in close proximity. They are the Maler, the Malpaharia, and the Santal. Prasad has tried to analyze the process of interaction in its social, economic, and political aspects. He has concluded that ecological factors led to cultural differences especially in economic activities between the three. Though this kind of theoretical model leads to ecological determinism, it provides a basis for the understanding of their interdependence. He observes that the interaction between the three tribes with non-tribes leads to compromise, conflict, and competition. He further observes that the process of interaction has led to cultural borrowing among the tribes and non-tribes (Prasad, 1974 : 53-64).

Another study which analyzes the tribe/non-tribe interaction, to some extent, is that of Aurora (1972). According to Aurora (1972 : 64, 280) major areas of the Bhilala's interaction with non-tribes are in economic activities, religious beliefs and practices, and to some extent in the political sphere, leading to diffusion and adoption of "broader Hindu culture."

It will be difficult to discuss each tribe separately to analyze its process of interaction with non-tribes. Therefore, geographical regions will be taken up for the purpose of analysis. The classification of regions is essentially adopted from the territorial groupings suggested by Roy Burman (1972a: 39-50). He has adopted a five-fold classification taking into account historical, ethnic, and socio-cultural relations.

These geographical regions are:

1) Northeast India comprising Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, and Meghalaya.

2) The sub-Himalayan region of north and northwest comprising north and northwest Uttar Pradesh, Bengal, and Bihar.

3) Western India comprising Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.

4) Central and east India covering West Bengal, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh.

5) South India comprising Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, and the different Union Territories, including all the islands of the region (Roy Burman, 1972a: 39).*

The pattern of interaction in each geographical region will be discussed separately.

Northeast India

Before analyzing available data on the patterns of tribe/non-tribe interactions, it is important to note that earlier ethnographers like Gorer (1938), Hutton (1921b), Furer-Haimendorf (1939), and others treated the tribes as isolates. They described the tribes as if they existed more or less in isolation.

To some extent the observable realities might have seemed to warrant this forty or fifty years ago, when these anthropologists studied the tribes of northeast India. It is difficult to believe, however, that the levels of interaction between the tribes and non-tribes could have been so low. A careful study of these ethnographies does show that even at that time the level of interaction between tribes and non-tribes was significant. Another point that should be kept in perspective is that the tribes of northeast India occupy territories close to China and Burma. In the past, owing to trade with neighbouring countries, the tribes of this region were interacting with non-tribes. Therefore the interaction process of these tribes and non-tribes must be understood in the light of their spatial situation within India and in relation to Burma and China. In order to limit the discussion, only the

*In a recent paper Vidyarthi (1972 : 31-133) has suggested a four-fold classification for the discussion of Indian ethnography. Except that Roy Burman's first two categories have been collapsed by Vidyarthi to form the Himalayan region, there seems not much difference between the classification proposed by the two authors. I have adopted Roy Burman's classification as it has allowed me to have a broader framework for understanding the process of interaction.

interaction between tribes and non-tribes within India will be discussed.

Hutton (1921b), while describing war among the Sema Naga, pointed out that

> The real causes of war are probably not more than three in number in the Sema country—first, shortage of land necessitating forcible encroachment on that of neighbouring villages; secondly, the protection of trading interests, as an attempt on the part of one village to trade directly with another at some distance has often caused war with an intervening village through which the trade used to pass (much to the profit of that intervening village) and which retaliates for its loss by making war on the interlopers, cutting up their trading parties, destroying the inter-communication between the offending villages, and compelling their trade to return to its old channel. Trade routes east of the administered area are still jealously protected in this way, and each village on a route makes its little profit on all articles passing backwards and forwards—daos, salt, pigs, cloths, pots, and the like. The third cause is found in the fits of restlessness that from time to time afflict most Naga villages, the desire of the young men as yet untried to prove their manhood and gain the right of wearing the warrior's gauntlets (Hutton, 1921b: 167).

The above description clearly shows interaction at inter-village level and among the tribes. Further, the factors of conflict are well narrated in this account.

Another example, from recent enthnography of the Aka, shows that the process of interaction among tribes sharing a large spatial boundary is not uncommon temporally. While discussing the "trade and barter" of the Aka, Sinha provides the following description:

> The trade of the Akas, as such, is of two kinds: one which they carry on among themselves and what can be conveniently called the 'inter-village' trade, and secondly, their trade with the plains. The system of barter is more practicable in the mutual trade between their own villages and to some extent with the neighbouring Bangni people with whom they often

> come into contact for trade purposes. In their trade with the people in the plains [non-tribes], they have to deal essentially in cash. The occasions for the latter kind of trade arise only when they go down to the plains and when they take the local produce, in which fowls figure prominently, for sale there. With the money they get in return for their commodities, they usually purchase things of their necessity like cloth, silver ornaments and utensils. Their trade with the plains [non-tribes] has introduced [a] good deal of currency among them. It has, however, neither affected their inter-village trade nor their indigenous barter. Any marital relations with the Mompas, Khowas, Daflas and Sherdukpens, the other tribes living in the division, thus involve heavy punishment by the village council. The only concession in this respect is that of permitted social relations of the Akas with the Mijis. The two tribes have come close to each other in course of their history, partly by geographical neighbourhood and partly by common social outlook. The Akas and the Mijis today enjoy social relations with each other (Raghuvir Sinha, 1962 : 48-52).

Clearly, the Aka have been interacting with a wider world which included non-tribes and tribes alike. For an Aka the interaction is only possible in a "we" and "they" situation at different levels. "We" in this case are the Aka themselves, and "they" can be any non-Aka. The function of the interaction is defined in various situations. Cooperation in case of trade and marriage leads to the integration of the Aka and the Miji.

Taking the lead from the process of interaction described for the Sema Naga and the Aka, let us turn to the other tribes. Roy Burman and Thukral (1970) have tried to provide a macro picture of the dynamic process of interaction among the various tribes numbering about forty (leaving aside numerically smaller ones) and non-tribes of northeast India. According to them:

> A change is taking place in the perspective of the larger setting for social interactions. It is significant to note that for most of the tribes of this region the etymological meaning of their name is 'man'. It appears that in their traditional world view they divided mankind in two groups—one consisting of themselves only and the other consisting of the rest of humanity.

> With the expansion of communication, intensification of contact and with being drawn in the orbit of world technological order, the frame of reference of these communities for social interaction is rapidly undergoing a change. For various purposes they perceive their reference groups differently depending on their stage of cultural development (Roy Burman and Thukral, 1970 : 107).

An almost similar conclusion has been drawn by Burling (1963) in his study of a Garo village. He has shown that the patterns of interaction between the Garo and the non-Garo (or non-tribes) of the plains have been changing. Among the non-tribes the Christian missionaries have interacted most with the Garo. The resultant effect can be observed in terms of a high rate of conversion to Christianity or acculturation.

Because of geographical isolation, in spatial terms the interactions between tribes and non-tribes (mostly Hindus from the plains) and other tribes of the northeast region are not frequent as one would observe in other parts of India. One of the important reasons for this spatial separation is that most of the tribes in this area live in mono-tribal villages. In other words, the whole village is inhabited by a single tribe like the Dafla, the Apa Tani, and the Aka in Arunachal Pradesh. And where they do live in multi-tribal habitations, due to geographical isolation and very low population density their interactions with non-tribes are low. With the recent introduction of transport facilities in a few areas distance has lost its former importance, but it still continues to be a major factor and acts as a block against any interaction between the tribes and non-tribes.

In the temporal dimension, the tribes of this region have interacted only recently with non-tribes. During World War II, a tribe came from outside and settled down in the Garo hills. More recently the Garo have interacted with many outside groups like contractors, government officials, military personnel, and merchants.

In most cases, it appears this interaction has led to tension and friction. Whatever the political reasons, conflict seems to be the outcome of interactive situations. This is true also of interaction among the tribes themselves.

In the demographic dimension, in this region, the tribes enjoy

numerical dominance over the non-tribes. Ninety per cent of the tribes are in rural and isolated areas. This seems to be yet another factor favouring low interaction between tribes and non-tribes.

In the areas of religion and language the effects of interaction are quite substantial, leading to assimilation and to some extent integration of Christianity and Hinduism. Similarly, the languages of many tribes (especially of those living in urban centres) have undergone some modifications. Those living in cities tend to be polylingual.

On the basis of general observation in the region, it has been noted that the tribe/non-tribe interaction in trade has resulted in cooperation.

> The trade between Apatanis and their Dafla and Miri neighbours is largely based on the complementary nature of their economics. The exchange of surplus Apatani rice against Dafla or Miri animals is, therefore, to the advantage of both sides. Besides, buying mithun and pigs for rice, the Apatanis obtain from Daflas almost all the cotton required for their highly developed weaving industries (Roy Burman and Thukral, 1970: 93).

In the political arena it is evident that the tribes had been, and continued to be, in competition and conflict with non-tribes, leading in some instances to serious hostilities. These hostilities have led even to armed confrontation. Integration of the tribes and non-tribes within the Indian civilization is not facilitated by such interaction.

The interaction between tribes and non-tribes has increased recently because of the accelerated pace of formal education, requirement of working together in plantations, and trade. The people of the plains have influenced the languages and speech patterns of the tribes. The increasing use of Bengali, Assamese, and Hindi by the tribes is indicative of this process. It is to be expected that the languages of the individual tribes on one hand, and those of other interacting tribal and non-tribal groups, on the other, will come closer to one another (Roy Burman and Thukral, 1970 : 27-30).

The sub-Himalayan Region

The sub-Himalayan region of north and northwest India com-

prises the hill districts of north Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. The tribes of the region are living mostly in Himachal Pradesh. They are the Kinnaura, the Gaddi, the Gujjar, the Jad, the Lamba, the Khampa, the Lahula, the Pangwala, the Swangla, and the Bhot or Bodh. The population ratio between tribes and non-tribes is about 1:22. In Uttar Pradesh, officially there were no tribes until recently. Some communities have now been included in the list of scheduled tribes.

Majumdar (1962) classified the Khasa as a tribe and studied them. While discussing Khasa relationships with non-tribes, Majumdar reported:

> Living as they do, a self-supporting life, and having no facilities of communication and transport, villagers of Jaunsar Bawar so far had little contact with the people of the plains and never took the latter into confidence. The fact was that the outsiders, who came into contact with them as occasional visitors, mostly on business purposes, used to misunderstand the Jaunsaris and to ridicule them for their quaint customs and grotesque practices. As a result, the Jaunsaris have a hostile or sceptical attitude towards outsiders in general.
>
> A deeper probe, however, revealed that there were certain reasons for the Jaunsaris' likes and dislikes. Thus, Rati of Lohari remarked, 'No outsider has gone back from here with a good name'. He further observed, 'in the beginning they are all saints. They would not touch wine, eat meat, or flirt with our *dhyantis*, but after some time they would do everything and even worse. We don't have any respect for such people and don't want them to stay in our villages....'
>
> Recently, however, as a result of the increased contact between the outsiders and the villagers, the latter have become more sophisticated in matters of drink and women, and the amoral relations with the outsiders have been greatly curbed and discouraged. The increased awareness and knowledge of the world outside have also helped the villagers to defend themselves against exploitation by shopkeepers and other outsiders. On the other hand, they have also come to recognize certain types of outsiders as their friends and helpers (Majumdar, 1962 : 354-356).

The above description of the Khasa shows temporal changes in their interaction pattern with non-tribes. The tribe/non-tribe interaction seems limited between the Khasa on the one hand and the non-tribe traders and government officials on the other. This interaction, though functional, was characterized by suspicion and a degree of hostility. Only recently have conflicts been replaced by cooperation. The resultant influence, as described by Majumdar (1962 : 321-332), is seen in the changed position of women. A similar observation about the Khasa has been made by Seth (1967 : 40-44). The tribe/non-tribe interaction has substantially affected the polyandrous family system, leading to changes in the economic system.

Among the Gaddi of Chhamba district in Himachal Pradesh one observes a smoewhat different type of tribe/non-tribe interaction pattern. Occupationally the Gaddi are a semi-agricultural and pastoral tribe. Apart from this they also weave and engage in minor trade. Before winter starts, the Gaddi migrate from high altitude mountains to low altitude plains of Mandi district for spending their winter with their flocks of sheep. All through winter they live in the plains and before summer begins they return to the mountains. In this way, the Gaddi have a large spatial region for interaction with non-tribes. There are two sets of non-tribes for the Gaddi to interact. In summer, they interact with the non-tribes of hills, whereas during the winter they interact with the non-tribes in the plains. This process of interaction has been known for many centuries.

The Gaddi pattern of interaction with non-tribes may be characterized as seasonal and periodic. During the pastoral nomadic state, the Gaddi take up weaving and also engage in trade with non-tribes in the plains. In this interactive situation they treat their non-tribe friends as their clients and remain in competition with many non-tribes. When they return to the mountains during summer, where they grow their summer crops, their interaction pattern is more of cooperation.

The above descriptions show that the interaction patterns, in historical perspective, among these two tribes have varied from conflict to cooperation and competition depending upon the historical and ecological situation.

In the temporal dimension in the case of Jaunsar Bawar, increasing communication has led to cooperation between the

tribes and non-tribes, whereas among the Gaddi periodic but continuous interaction has led to similar results. In spatial terms, the non-tribes are forced to interact with the tribes in the case of the Gaddi, whereas the non-tribes from the plains have forced the tribes to interact in the case of the Khasa. In the demographic dimension, the sub-Himalayan region is dominated by non-tribes. This has resulted in lower social status for the tribes.

In the areas of language and religion one observes minor changes due to limited interaction and relative isolation. Further, the languages used by the tribes and the non-tribes contain enough common words for smooth communication without necessitating any fundamental changes in each other's language.

In the practical sphere the interactions of the tribes and the non-tribes have not generated any serious conflicts. Instead, the tribes are gradually becoming a part of the larger political system.

Western India

The western India region comprises Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Maharashtra. Among the tribes of western India the Bhil, who are dispersed in many states—Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat—are among the numerically most dominant tribes of the country. In demographic terms the tribe to non-tribe ratio in this region is approximately 1:8 in Gujarat and Rajasthan, while it is 1:6 in Maharashtra. For the purpose of interaction analysis, the Bhil of Rajasthan and Gujarat only are discussed here.

Nath (1960) and Doshi (1974) have published full-length ethnographies of the Bhil of Gujarat and Rajasthan. Both authors have clearly indicated the dispersed pattern of Bhil villages. In both the areas the Bhil are living as settled agriculturists. In terms of their interaction with non-tribes, the pattern does not differ significantly. According to Nath the major interactions of the Ratanmal Bhil are with the forest contractors (Nath, 1960 : 40-44). The situation is the same for the Rajasthan Bhil J. K. Doshi, 1974 : 37-41).

While discussing the patterns of interaction between the Rajasthan Bhil and non-tribes, Doshi points out that

Though the Bhils have had long association with the Hindus

> who are strongly characterised by a hierarchical system—the caste—they have not absorbed the elements of caste to any considerable degree. Among themselves, they are all equal; and in relation to others, particularly Hindu castes, they claim an independent status (J.K. Doshi, 1974 : 177).

However, Nath finds

> ... significant and close contact with, (1) certain power groups consisting mainly of Rajputs, Vania and Vohra traders, and (2) with a few other tribal groups, some of whom are also in positions of authority, or at any rate, influence their life to a considerable extent. Because of the several intervening factors, inter-group relations in the area are likely to be more complicated than elsewhere, where the Bhils live by themselves (Nath, 1960 : 60).

Further, he observes that the international pattern is discontinuous and of a durable nature. According to him:

> It is often found that people of a particular village or neighbourhood always go working for a particular operator, going often long distances in preference to a coupe in the very next village....Every winter, a few Bhils go west to the rich plains of Gujarat, particularly the Kaira district, to work as labourers on cotton, tobacco and ground-nut fields of the Patidars (Nath, 1960 : 43).

This situation presents a slightly different pattern of interaction from that observed in some other regions. In spatial terms, as in the case of the Gaddi of Himachal Pradesh, a large area of interaction between tribes and non-tribes is involved. The pattern appears to have assumed stability and does not involve antagonism. The picture seems different in Rajasthan where the interaction has led to various kinds of conflict.

In the fields of religion and language the tribes in both the regions have been influenced by the language of the region at large. However, non-tribal religions have not been able to make any strong impact, although the Christian missionaries have seriously tried to convert the Bhil to Christianity. Due to increased

activity in forest areas in the whole region, the tribes, especially the Bhil, have been exploited by non-tribe contractors. Nath and Doshi have commented on the methods of exploitation by non-tribes. One area where non-tribe interaction has led to behavioural changes among the tribes is drinking. Among many tribes of this region the socio-religious importance of liquor has been undermined under Hindu influence.

It may be suggested that the tribe/non-tribe interaction in this area has been historically a conflicting one, especially during the pre-British period. Even during the British period its character did not change much. But after independence, though the interaction remains somewhat exploitative, it is more towards cooperation (Mann, 1969 : 71-77).

Central and Eastern India

Central and eastern India cover West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, and Andhra Pradesh. The major tribes living in this area are the Bhil, the Chenchu, the Gond, the Santal, the Savara, the Khond, the Gadaba, the Bagada, and the Jatapu. These tribes present a varying spectrum of socio-economic and technological order of life. In this region we find large tribes like the Gond, the Bhil, and the Santal, and also small tribes like the Birhor and the Chenchu, who still live in isolated hill tracts as hunters and food-gatherers.

The region also covers various geographic zones, like West Bengal and Bihar on one side, and Orissa and Andhra Pradesh on the other. A number of specific studies on the tribes of this region have been done since the turn of the century. Among the earlier studies are those of Roy (1912), Elwin (1943), Furer-Haimendorf (1943), and Majumdar (1950). The recent studies are those of Dube (1951), Bailey (1960), Fuchs (1960), Vidyarthi (1963), and Prasad Rao (1970).

It is interesting to observe that in almost all these studies the patterns of interaction between the tribes and non-tribes have been discussed directly or indirectly. In a majority of these studies efforts were made to understand how non-tribes influenced the tribes, leading to socio-cultural changes. For the purpose of the present analysis, we shall limit our discussion to the Santal, the Chenchu, and the Jatapu.

According to Datta Majumdar:

> The principal impinging forces on the life of the Santal people, especially in the district of Santal Parganas, since the nineteenth century have, however, been Hinduism, British Government, and Christianity. . . . Hinduism has had a considerable influence on Santal culture, in recent times as well as in the distant past. All aspects of Santal life, material, economic, social, religious, and linguistic, have been affected by Hindu culture. . . . The impact of Hindu landlords, money-lenders and traders on the economic life of the Santal in recent times has been more conscious. This impact cannot be judged as a separate phenomenon, however, but must be related to the policy and action of the British Government. Thus it has been shown how the joint impact of government officials and Hindu landlords, money-lenders and traders led to the economic impoverishment of the Santal, and to the rebellion of 1855 (Datta Majumdar, 1956 : 53-54).

Almost thirty years ago Furer-Haimendorf, while studying the Chenchu, observed that even the isolated Chenchu living in the jungles of Kurnool district interacted with many non-tribes. A Chenchu encounters non-tribes when he descends from his wooded hills and comes to the villages and bazaars. He observes that

> In the material sphere these contacts with the local Telugu peasantry resulted in such accretions to Chenchu culture as earthen pots, cotton clothes and grinding stones. Although woven cloth must have been known to the Chenchus for a long time, the universal displacement of leaf-garments is probably less than a century old, and it may well be that the type of houses found in the permanent settlements has also developed under the influence of progressive plains civilizations. The latter point, however, is not beyond doubt for the existence of a similar house-type among the Yanadis, another forest tribe of the Nallamalai Hills, may mean that it had a place in aboriginal culture at an early date. The string instrument known as Kineri, on the other hand, and the apparatus for distilling liquor, which is based on the complicated process of evaporation and condensation and can hardly be constructed

without earthen pots, are both almost certainly taken over from Telugu folks (Furer-Haimendorf, 1943 : 286-287).

The above observations suggest a cooperative type of interaction pattern between the tribes and non-tribes resulting in the acculturation of the Santal and the Chenchu.

The Santal description shows a temporal interaction between them and the non-tribes in which the latter played a dominant role though no conscious efforts were made by them to influence the Santal. However, in the process of economic interactions the non-tribes tried to exploit the Santal, as was the case also elsewhere in India. This exploitation led to the economic impoverishment of the Santal. On many occasions observation showed that their interaction led to conflict and as both the Santal and the non-tribes were in close spatial proximity, the conflicts led to revolts on some occasions. Analysis shows two important resultant effects brought about due to interaction. One is that in the process of interaction the principle of reciprocal borrowing of cultural traits seems very common between the Santal and the non-tribes. Secondly, the non-tribe Christians did not make any headway among the Santal. In a similar process the Chenchu have had to accept a slightly lower status than non-tribes.

A different pattern of interaction was observed among the Jatapu of Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh where the non-tribes were accepted as members of the tribe. There the *sahukar* (moneylending) families, who came to live with the tribals, were gladly received by the tribes who even gave them credit for their generosity in coming all the way from the plains to cater to the day to day necessities of the tribe by staying with them. According to Prasad Rao

> The position of Sahukar family was peculiar. Even though he was a landless, he was given a status equal to that of tribal elite like Smantho (Headman), Dissari (Astrologer) and Zanni (Priest). The headman used to seek the opinion of the Sahukar in deciding the local disputes. The resident Sahukar families maintain intimate contact with tribes men. The tribal women do not avoid them and the children call them as 'Mama' (mother's brother) . . . (Prasad Rao, 1971 : 3).

In this tribe/non-tribe interaction we find how the tribe is happy to receive a non-tribe when the interaction appears beneficial to them. The non-tribe in these circumstances is treated with honour and gratitude. But this welcome can change into hostility and even worse, when exploitation crosses the tolerance limit. The explosive situation in Srikakulam is too recent to need any recounting.

South India

The southern region may be characterized by two important features:

1) There are a number of tribes living in isolated islands—in the Bay of Bengal, and in the Lakshadweep islands in the Arabian sea—of whom the Andaman islanders attracted A.R. Brown (better known as A. Radcliff-Brown).

2) Historically, the region inhabited by tribes like the Toda and the Kota, who were studied even before the turn of the century.

Historically the most important study is that of Rivers. In a slightly different context, Rivers had noted the interaction between the Toda and the Kota. However, his major emphasis remained on social organization (Rivers, 1906).

For the purpose of present analysis the Andamanese, the Nicobarese, and the Kadar of Cochin will be discussed.

In the chain of Andaman and Nicobar islands live a number of tribes like the Great Andamanese, the Onge, the Jarawa, and the Sentinelese. In the last hundred years they have been continuously decreasing in number. In the process of tribe/non-tribe interaction, the tribes were forced to live with the diseases of non-tribes which led to their destruction. The gazetteer of Andaman and Nicobar islands of 1908 made the following observations:

> The cause of diminution of the population is infectious and contagious disease, the result of contact with higher civilization. Epidemics, all imported, of pneumonia (1868), syphilis (1876), measles (1877) and influenza (1892) together with exposure to the sun and wind in cleared spaces, the excessive use of tobacco (but not of intoxicants) and over-clothing, have been the means of destroying them. It is disease that has

worn down the actual numbers of the tribes in contact with civilized men to a fifth in one generation and has apparently rendered the union of the sexes infructuous in three-fourths of the cases (quoted in Pandit, 1972 : 243).

The other tribes in these islands have varying degrees of interaction with the outside world. For example, the Great Andamanese, living in the forest area, interact less as compared to those living on the coast. The interaction of the latter with non-tribes is close and cooperative. Similar observations can be made about the Onge. Such interaction has led to acculturation of the tribes. In contrast, one observes a state of permanent conflict between the Jarawas and the non-tribes. It is observed that the Jarawa and the non-tribes have gone through different phases of interaction, from cooperation to hostility, due to lack of proper initiative taken by the non-tribes represented by employees of the British-controlled administration. A similar observation can be made about the Sentinelese.

In Nicobar the different groups have learned to live with one another. Considerable exchange of essential goods takes place. Inter-island trade indicates relationships of mutual help and dependence. In the process, regular, though infrequent, inter-island contacts are maintained.

It is important to point out that the tribe/non-tribe interaction is influenced by spatial separation. Data from the Andamans support this view. Pandit observes :

> The geographical factor operates not only with regard to contact between tribal and non-tribal groups but also affects the inter- and intra-tribal relationships. The tribes of Andaman for instance have little opportunity of meeting and knowing each other because of the distance and the sea that separates them (Pandit, 1972 : 254).

In the political sphere the tribes of the Andaman and Nicobar islands suffered heavily because of Japanese occupation during World War II. This historical event may be viewed as a forced interactive situation leading to conflict and hostility.

However, in case of the Kadar, living in the mainland in the Chittur Taluk of Kerala, one observes tribe/non-tribe patterns of

interaction similar to those observed elsewhere in India. Ehrenfels observes:

> Formerly the staple food consisted of jungle roots and even now at certain times, when, owing to lack of income or for other reasons, rice is not available, the daily food will again be collected in the jungle. Modern Kadar complain at such occasions of hunger. They have become accustomed to filling the stomachs with rice, as plains people do. But the actual nutrition of the people does not appear to suffer during such epochs without rice, for roots are indeed richer in nutritious value and vitamins and even tastier than rice. Opium and arrack were unknown in the pre-contractor days and clothes were manufactured from bark, fibres and leaves, [instead of being] bought at big prices from the contractor as it is the case now (Ehrenfels, 1952 : 26).

Here the pattern of interaction between tribes and non-tribes seems to be exploitative on the part of the non-tribes, although the increasing dependence of the tribes on the non-tribes, like forest contractors, has led to cooperation between the two.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, the tribe/non-tribe interaction was conceived as a socio-cultural process. The analysis shows that demographic, spatial, temporal, psychological, and functional factors influence this process. Theoretically, a tribe treats every non-member as a non-tribal. For example, for a Munda every fellow member of the tribe falls under the "we" category, while any non-Munda, whether a Ho, a Bhil, or a Brahman, falls in the "they"—non-tribe—category.

The emic approach has helped in categorizing the tribes and non-tribes for the purpose of description, analysis, and interpretation. If the etic approach had been used, the analysis would have shown no difference between the tribes while interacting with non-tribes. Although it varies from region to region, in northeast India, it seems, in general, that the tribe/non-tribe pattern of interaction is one either of conflict or of competition. In the sub-

Himalayan region, the pattern of interaction has changed with increased communication to one of cooperation, although the tribes, in the process, have had to accept a lower status compared to the non-tribes. In western India, the tribe/non-tribe pattern of interaction was one of conflict during the pre-independence period. After independence, it seems, there is more cooperation in the interactive situation. In central and east India the emphases vary from cooperation to competition to conflict. The emphasis in Orissa villages is on cooperation, whereas in the industrial belts it is on competition. In some parts of Bihar it is on conflict. In south India, the pattern seems to be exploitative on the part of the non-tribes, though cooperation appears to be the general norm.

The temporal analysis shows that the tribes at no time were isolated completely from the non-tribes in the Indian civilization. The tribes interacted and continue to interact with the non-tribes. After independence the rate of interaction has accelerated in almost all parts of India. The patterns of tribe/non-tribe interaction in various regions of India show an increasing socio-economic interdependence between the two.

The resultant effect of these patterns of interaction, in general, are acculturation of tribes, especially in the area of material culture. The goods manufactured by outside groups have been adopted for use by the tribes. However, it is necessary to point out that the adoption of the material culture of the non-tribes does not necessarily denote change in the total way of life of the tribes. In general, the level of acculturation differs from region to region.

In northeast India, the numerical dominance of tribes has not allowed the cultural assimilation or acculturation of the tribes into the Indian civilization. However, in the areas of language and religion, the resultant effect of tribe/non-tribe interaction has led to the acceptance of Christianity and Hinduism to some extent.

In the sub-Himalayan region the historical relations and the patterns of interaction have been such that the tribes were in the process of least acculturation leading to changes in the material culture to a limited degree. In the areas of language and religion one can observe only minor changes. In central and east India the resultant effect of interaction seems to have led to reciprocal borrowing of cultural traits and also to some extent acculturation

in the area of religion. Close spatial interaction between tribes and non-tribes seems to have led to the development of a composite mosaic of separate cultural entities of the tribes within the Indian civilization.

In western India, the limited but exploitative attitude of the non-tribes towards the tribes has resulted in a certain degree of assimilation of the tribes into the Indian civilization.

In south India, the isolated tribes have been victims of interaction with the non-tribes as the latter introduced many diseases to them, more so among the island tribes. In other parts of south India interaction has led to assimilation of the tribes within the Indian civilization.

GOPAL BHARDWAJ

Socio-Political Movements Among the Tribes of India

FROM time immemorial different societies all over the world have experienced a variety of movements of wide-ranging forms, purposes, and methods. All types of movements are a variant of social change; concrete manifestation of what one may call conscious, collective, continued, and concerted goal-oriented action of a certain organized group or society.

Social Movement and Social Science

To understand and analyze the socio-political movements among the tribes of India it is appropriate first to bring together the relevant definitions and concepts from some of the representative writings on social movements.

Social movements represent an important sphere of social activity and are currently becoming a matter of increasing concern for the general public as well as the administrators and policy-makers all over the world. Therefore they assume a specific significance from the point of view of the social sciences. Berry Mclaughlin finds that

> the study of social movements is relatively neglected in social sciences and there are few books written specifically on the topic, almost no major theoretical treatment and almost no courses devoted to this area in the Departments of Sociology, Political Science and Psychology. When social movements are mentioned, they are often regarded as epiphenomena, as the by-product of socio-political development, or the topic is dis-

cussed [in passing as a subspecies of collective behaviour (Mclaughlin, 1969 : 1).

Mclaughlin's assessment ends with the assertion that "actually, social movements deserve to be studied in their own right as phenomena."

Mclaughlin (1969 : 3) gives us representative definitions of social movement. Herbert Blumer's definition of a social movement as "collective enterprises to establish a new order of life" has been considered as a classic definition. Among the other definitions are "group behaviour directed in a concerned way at bringing about social change"; "a group venture extending beyond a local community or a single event and involving a systematic effort to inaugurate changes in thought, behaviour, and social relationships"; and "a collectivity which acts with some continuity to promote or resist change in a society or group of which it is a part."

Paul Wilkinson (1971 : 1) is concerned with the formulation of a working concept of social movement rather than with giving a precise definition. He explains the word movement as follows: The English word movement derives from the old French verb *movior*, which means to move, stir or impel; and the medieval *movimentum* (turn); and then reproduces the definition of a movement from the Oxford dictionary as "a series of actions and endeavours of a body of persons for a special object." His working concept of social movement (Wilkinson, 1971 : 26-27) is based on the following formulations:

1) A social movement is a deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution, or withdrawal into a utopian community.

2) A social movement must evince a minimal degree of organization, thought his may range from a loose, informal, or partial level of organization to a highly institutionalized or bureaucratized form.

3) A social movement's commitment to change and the *raison d'être* of its organization are founded upon the conscious volition, normative commitment to the movement's aims or beliefs and active participation on the part of followers or members.

Thus, according to Wilkinson, the major characteristics of social movements are: conscious commitment to change; minimal organization; and normative commitment and participation (Wilkinson, 1971 : 47).

"Social movements are multi-dimensional and kaleidoscopic" (Wilkinson, 1971 : 46), and emerge from a variety of reasons or motivating factors. They range "from religious to secular, from revolutionary to reactionary, from cooperative to schismatic" (Mclaughlin, 1969 : 4), and so on. "They have their inception in a condition of unrest and derive their motive power on one hand from dissatisfaction with the current form of life, and on the other from wishes and hopes for a new scheme or system of living" (Blumer in Mclaughlin, 1969 : 8).

Mahapatra (1968 : 47) cites two other definitions of a social movement. According to the first, "A social movement occurs when a fairly large number of people [are] bound together in order to alter or supplant some position of existing culture or social order or to redistribute the power of control within a society" (Cameron, 1966 : 7-8). The other defines a social movement as a "direct orientation towards a change in the social order, that is, in the patterns of human relations, in social institutions and social norms" (Smelser, 1962 :100fn).

Having viewed the content of these definitions, we can sum up the major characteristics of a social movement and define it thus : "A social movement is an organized social activity or endeavour of a sufficiently large number of people who consciously and continuously involve or take part in it with some specific goal or object before them—the objective being the establishment of a new social order, or promotion or resistance to change in one's social environment."

Mclaughlin identifies two main types of social movements: "revolutionary movements" and "reform movements," and uses both these types as a continuum. He distinguishes the two types as follows: "Both seek to influence social order but revolutionary movement attacks existing norms and values and attempts to substitute new ones while the reform movement accepts existing norms and values and uses them to criticize the social defects it opposes" (Mclaughlin, 1969 : 4).

Wallace (in Mclaughlin, 1969 : 30-52) exclusively deals with only one type of social movement—"revitalization"—which is,

according to Mclaughlin, "more towards the revolutionary than the reform end of the continuum" proposed by him. Wallace lists several sub-types of revitalization movements. According to him they are "evidently not unusual phenomena, but are recurrent factors in human history." He defines a revitalization movement as "a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture" (Wallace in Mclaughlin, 1969 :31-32). Wallace's types of revitalization movements are:

1) *Nativistic movements*, which are characterized by strong emphasis on the elimination of alien persons, customs, values, and material from the mazeway (after Linton).

2) *Revivalistic movements*, which emphasize the institution of customs, values, and even aspects of nature which are thought to have been in the mazeway of previous generations but are not now present.

3) *Cargo cults*, which emphasize the importation of alien values, customs, and material into the mazeway and expect them to be delivered like a ship's cargo.

4) *Vitalistic movements*, which emphasize the importation of alien elements into the mazeway, but do not necessarily involve ship and cargo as the mechanism.

5) *Millenarian movements*, which emphasize mazeway transformation organized by the supernatural.

6) *Messianic movements*, which emphasize the participation of a divine saviour in human flesh in the mazeway transformation.

The term mazeway has been defined by Wallace as an "individual's mental image of his total society and culture."

Wilkinson (1971: 51-52) is concerned with a pragmatic "typification" of social movements rather than with a typology based on any conceptual principality. His ten-fold classification includes the following categories:

1) Religious movements (millenarism and sect).
2) Movements of rural and urban discontent.
3) Nativist, nationalist, and race movements.
4) Imperialism and pan-movements.
5) Class and occupational interest movements.
6) Moral protest and reformist movements.
7) Revolutionary, resistance, and counter-revolutionary movements.

8) Intellectual movements.
9) Youth movements.
10) Women's movements.

Edward Roy (1962 : 304) gives the following classification, of limited context, with the respectivec haracterization of each type:

1) *Resistance movements* arise when (i) an acculturative situation develops between a dominant and a subordinate culture, (ii) subordination involves excessive economic exploitation and social degradation, (iii) there is a minimum of social interaction between the two groups, and (iv) barriers to successful emulation of the dominant culture are present.

2) *Emulative movements* arise when (i) an acculturative situation has developed between a dominant and a subordinate but well advanced culture, (ii) subordination involves lack of prestige but not excessive exploitation, (iii) maximum social interaction exists between the two, though boundaries are still maintained between them, and (iv) no barriers exist to successful emulation of the dominant culture.

Fuchs, in his *Rebellious Prophets* (1965), is concerned mainly with messianic movements, but the general characterization of such movements, as given by him, may be of interest to students of social movements. These characteristics also show *why* and *how* such movements originate and what major forms are acquired by them (Fuchs, 1965 : 1-16). These movements arise when a society is intensely dissatisfied with the social and economic conditions which it is forced to accept and, in consequence, there is emotional unrest in it with certain hysterical symptoms. At this time a leader emerges who demands implicit faith and obedience. The test of this unquestioned faith and obedience consists either in a radical change of life, or a wholesale destruction of property and rejection of the established authority and call for rebellion against it. There are threats of severe punishment to the opponents of and traitors to the movement. There is often the remembrance of a "Golden Age," dating back to the beginning of mankind. There may be a powerful trend towards *revivalism*, that is, a renewed interest in the traditional religion, coming, as a rule, after a period of indifference or decline, accompanied with expressions of great emotional excitement, or toward *nativism*, that is, conscious attempts may be made by the people to restore selected aspects of their pristine culture and to reject alien elements

previously adopted from foreign cultures. The movement could also be oriented to *vitalism*, that is, the desire of the members in the movement for alien goods, especially spiritual ones, from heaven, through magic or supernatural powers. It can take several other forms such as *syncretism*, that is, the indiscriminate adoption of various cultural traits of the superior culture by a backward people"; *eschatologism*, that is, belief in world renewal and improvement after a world-wide catastrophic revolution and upheaval; or *millenarianism* (or *chiliasm*), that is, the hope or expectation of a paradise on earth, lasting a thousand years or some indefinitely long period.

Having clues from Cameron (1966) and Smelser (1962), Mahapatra (1968) provides an elaborate typology of social movements based on six major bases of distinction:

1) *Source of initiative*-based movements include (i) endogamous, and (ii) exogamous types.

2) *Orientation of the existing culture or society*-based movements include (i) reactionary, (ii) conservative, (iii) revisionary, (iv) revolutionary, (v) nativistic, (vi) revitalistic, and (vii) reformative types.

3) *Portion of culture or social order dealt with*-based movements include (i) norm oriented, (ii) general social, and (iii) value oriented movements.

4) *Relation to religion or cult*-based movements include (i) religious, and (ii) secular types.

5) *Political action*-based movements include (i) political, (ii) non-political, and (iii) rivalistic types.

6) *Orientation as minority*-based movements include (i) emulation-reinforcing, and (ii) solidarity-reinforcing types.

Dealing with the types of tribal movements in India, Roy Burman says:

> Broadly there are two types of ethnic movements among the tribals; one marks a phase of expansion of tribal entities by creating united symbols and organs of command among erstwhile isolated tribal communities; national goals and symbols are not within their immediate focus of attention. Depending on the nature of elite there are two sub-types, viz., *infra-nationalism* and *proto-nationalism*. In the other type, the tribals are in close interaction with the larger nation society, and aware

of the national goals and symbols, but hold on to parochial goals and symbols, mainly as a result of disparity of development. This type is called *sub-nationalism* and is more found among non-tribes (Roy Burman, 1972c : 4).

The general principles commonly found in all types of social movement are: "(1)Shared value system, (2)sense of community, (3)norms of action, and (4)organisational structure" (Mclaughlin, 1969 : 4). "The analysis of socialm ovements and social change presupposes three categories of data: (i) data on the motivational structure or historical period in which the desire for change develops, (ii) data on the structure and development of social movements for change as well as those opposing it, and (iii) data on the motivation of those who participate in such movements" (McCormark in Mclaughlin, 1969 : 73). These points require more detailed and systematic standardization.

To sum up, the types presented here show extreme diversity, notwithstanding the availability of some fairly wide-ranging classifications available on this subject. These appear as independent formulations and nothing has been done towards cumulating them and evolving a precise and representative typology of social movements. Actually there is not much common among these "type formulations," though each one of them is capable of serving a limited and preliminary purpose for the study of social movements.

Movements Among Indian Tribes

Any study of social movements in tribal India should take into consideration the following, rather tentatively formulated, major aspects:

1) Historical and demographic background of tribal India, region-wise and tribe-wise.

2) Degrees of social changes among particular tribes and identification of social movements, if any, emerging out of these changes.

3) Cross-sectional view of such movements from the perspective of their underlying reasons and types as well as regional/local and intra-/inter-tribal extents.

4) Stocktaking of the available published material and extending its scope further through systematic micro and macro research programming and its policy implications.

5) Developing an essential body of theoretical details on the subject, and its policy implications.

Tribes in India represent a distinct cultural stratum and a definite demographic position in India's national life. Despite their comparative isolation, they have maintained a unique place in the history and civilization of India. Though their historical self-awareness may be of limited range and depth, there are several instances of their participation in the socio-political life of the region and the country. Yet the social history of Indian tribes has remained largely undiscovered. The myth of "isolated cultural wholes," as developed in African and Ocenian tribal studies and unquestioningly applied to the Indian tribal scene, may be proved a gross distortion and misrepresentation of historical and empirical reality. Indian tribes have asserted themselves in an organized manner in the local and regional power politics throughout the history, particularly during medieval times (Karve, 1968 : 60-62). The last two hundred years are full of such instances.

The tribes have been undergoing a variety of socio-political changes, particularly for the last 150-200 years. A large number of these changes have been initiated by external factors. Unprecedented economic, administrative, legal, religious, and political forces have successively infiltrated into the tribal areas, with a diversity of purposes and motives, and started influencing tribal life directly or indirectly. The changes produced by them have not followed a uniform course and the consequences of change differ from area to area and from tribe to tribe. In some regions, in certain sectors of life, the process of contact and subsequent changes has been smooth and adaptive. At other places, contact has produced contrary results. Similarly, the response of the tribes towards these contacts and influences has also not been uniform. One may have a definite acceptance-resistance continuum to locate a particular region's and a particular tribe's response towards these factors of change. Emergence of certain socio-political movements is one variant of such a response structure. There have been other variants as well. The socio-political movements among the tribes of India will have to be seen against this

background of response structure and other variants.

Tribal India has been witnessing an upsurge of social movements from the beginning of the last century. Almost all major tribes and areas of sizable tribal population have had their share of such movements. These movements have been of different magnitude in their underlying reasons, origination, objectives, organizational activities, and outcome. Approaches of the British administration and of government of free India towards some of these movements show wide variation. There is little evidence of serious academic interest in these movements. The practical significance of such studies notwithstanding, the material we have on this subject is sketchy. The utility of the available material is undeniable, but one wonders why there has been so little scholarly input into this unexplored and neglected field. This would have been a rewarding area for historically oriented social science studies.

Stephen Fuchs (1965 : XIII) has identified the reason for this neglect as lying "probably in the difficulty of getting at the sources that are buried away in journals and unpublished records inaccessible to most students of the subject." This is so, but it is only a partial explanation of this neglect. There can be other explanations as well. Because of the tradition of empirical study of cultures as they are, which has remained dominant throughout this century, anthropologists became averse to the past and to history. This accounts for the neglect of the study of socio-political movements which are mostly a matter of the past, or the roots of which lie deep in the past. It is evident from almost all the tribal monographs published during this period and up to the recent past. Secondly, it can be assumed that anthropological and sociological research in India has been showing a tendency to play safe by maintaining a degree of aloofness towards problems charged by politics, public protest, or controversy, or involvement of governmental policy and action. Thus, not only historical but many current problems of crucial importance in one's discipline are ignored. The study of tribal movements has suffered because of these two postures of the practitioners of the concerned disciplines.

Much of the published material on tribal movements in India is in the form of administrative records or in the form of stray writings based on material collected from secondary sources.

Fieldwork-based empirical studies are practically nonexistent, though the existence of a limited number of such attempts, partly published or unpublished, cannot be ruled out.

Anthropological-sociological writings dealing with tribal movements can be classified into two broad categories: those having an all-India or macro focus, and those having a regional, local, or micro focus. The attempts of Fuchs (1965) and Ghurye (1963) fall in the first category; whereas the attempts of Elwin (1960, 1961), Vidyarthi (1964a, 1964b, and 1971b), Sachchidanand (1965), Edward Roy (1962), and others fall into the second category. Almost all these studies or references to tribal movements contained therein are based on data or information collected from secondary sources, that is, references on the tribal movements appearing in earlier ethnographic writings and gazetteers, and also in the records maintained by the British as well as princely or feudal administrations. From these studies it appears that administrative reports and similar documentary writings of the British period, though prepared with a different angle and for a different purpose, contain materials useful for those engaged in anthropological-sociological and historical researches on this problem. All the available material of this type needs to be located and made use of.

The works cited above have shown a direct concern for the study of tribal movements. Besides, there are others who have made passing references to tribal movements, mostly local movements. Naik (1956), Bailey (1967), Chauhan (1970), and others are among such researchers. It is surprising that tribal movements did not catch the attention of Majumdar who had undertaken anthropological researches on some of the movement-ridden tribes of central India. Similarly, N. K. Bose (1971), Bhowmik (1971), and Chakrabarti and Mukerjee (1971), who have written books with titles such as *Tribal Life in India*, *Tribal India* and *Indian Tribes* have completely overlooked the theme of tribal movements. Many monographs on individual tribes also do not mention such movements, though they are known to have occurred.

Fairly elaborate and informative writings on the political processes and movements in certain pockets of tribal India have come from non-anthropologists—journalists, administrators, and others. Mankekar (1967), Joshi (1967), Anand (1968), and

Kamleswar Sinha (1970) are notable among them. The writings of Leuva (1963) and Raghaviah (1956) also contain some contextual information.

Kalia (1962), Mahapatra (1968), Desai (1971), Reddi (1972), and Naidu (1972) are among those who have undertaken field-work-based researches of some local and to a certain extent current tribal movements in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh. Some of their findings have appeared in journals as reported in conference papers. Similar details, if any, about the tribes of Assam and the eastern states and of the Chotanagpur region are not available. This again indicates the scanty attention paid to the study of tribal movements, along with the study of recent changes in the Indian tribal scene. Most of the material about Indian tribes has become rather outdated. Whatever has happened in the tribal world during the past twenty-five years and whatever is in process has not received the academic attention it deserves.

This lack of interest in the social movements of the Indian tribes permeates even the government-sponsored research under the Commissioner for Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes, the Anthropological Survey of India, and the Tribal Research Institutes of the states. An overview of the publications and reports of these bodies clearly shows their lack of interest in such studies. The annual reports of the commissioner for scheduled tribes and scheduled castes hardly provide any material on tribal movements. The Anthropological Survey of India and Tribal Research Institutes have also not undertaken any significant studies on this subject. The report of the study team on Tribal Research Institutes of the Planning Commission, under the chairmanship of L. M. Shrikant, contains a list of 696 studies undertaken and completed by the end of 1970 by all the Tribal Research Institutes. A reading of the titles of these studies shows that not even half a dozen of them are devoted to the study of movements or contemporary socio-political unrest among Indian tribes. These research establishments perhaps treat these movements as "political" or "law and order problems" and leave them to be dealt with by the politician or the administration.

Tribal movements can be described in a variety of ways and one may select any one of the following approaches:

1) *Tribe-focused approach*, to study movements in the context

of individual tribes.

2) *Region/state-focused approach*, to study movements in the context of specific regions.

3) *Movement types-focused approach*, to study movements in order of their types or sub-types according to their bases.

4) *Time dimension-focused approach*, to study movements in reference to specific points in time.

5) *Author or type of work/project-focused approach*, to study movements on the basis of sources of material such as administrative reports and research reports, or on the nature of data such as secondary data and primary data, or on the basis of authorship such as work by anthropologists, sociologists, and journalists.

One may also follow a group of these approaches as is done in this survey.

Movements Among the Tribes of the Eastern Region

The tribes of this region have been politically and culturally more active than the tribes of other regions of India. The Naga (comprising a dozen Naga tribes), the Garo, the Khasi, the Mizo, the Mikir, the Kuki, the Kachari, and the Dafla are some of the major tribes of this region. Though these tribes share identical ethnic and geographical backgrounds, culturally and linguistically they have maintained independent identities. Many of them are known for traditional hostilities and feuds. These have bearings upon tribal politics and emergence of new states in this region after independence.

Religious and political movements seem to have progressed simultaneously among the tribes of this region for the past one hundred to one hundred and fifty years. Missionary activities, along with the conversion of tribes to Christianity and establishment of churches, provided the base for major social changes among the tribals. The political movements had their origin in turbulent, miscreant, and defiant reactions of the tribals towards local kings, even before the arrival of the British in this area in the year 1832. Since the British took over, occasional events of serious conflict, raids, murders, armed action, and efforts at improving relations continued. The root cause of all this have been the tribals' apathetic attitudes, alien exploitation as well as domination.

The cultivation of new cultural contours under the impact of Christianity and contact with alien culture led to the emergence among the tribals of an educated elite of renewed politicization, of urge for cultural isolation from the mainstream of Indian life, and of bias against Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam (Mankekar, 1967 : 32). Political movements of the tribes acquired slogans like "political autonomy," "nothing short of sovereign status," and "Naga nationalism." These movements were supplemented by varied organizational activities like the Naga Club, the Naga National Council, the Naga Youth Movement, and the Naga Women's Society. The Naga Club put its demand before the Simon Commission, in 1929, for direct administration from the centre and grant of independence at the time of the departure of the British from India, saying ". . .You conquered us, when you go we should be left as we were." The instances of tribal movements in this region have remained centred on the basic theme of maintaining an "independent socio-political identity." The Naga have played a prominent role in the political processes of this region.

Political movements of the tribes of this region for autonomy or independence did not cease even after the departure of the British from India; in fact, they were intensified. The Naga National Council, the Assam Hill Tribal Union, the Eastern Indian Tribal Union, the All Party Hill Leaders' Conference, and so forth, have been striving for autonomy. Many of them adopted violent and subversive methods, which were met by stringent administrative and military action on the part of the Government of India. The Ashok Mehta Committee, the Pataskar Commission, and the J. P. Peace Mission were some of the government-sponsored approaches towards an amicable solution of the problem. These movements ultimately led to the emergence of Nagaland (February 1961) as a state, and upgrading of Tripura and Manipur into full states and creation of the state of Meghalaya (all in January 1972). Will the process end here? Current trends, as reported in the newspapers, hardly permit any such categorical conclusion. The process is an ongoing one, though its dimensions, as dictated by the new situations, are changing.

The above is only a brief and general sketch of the socio-political movements among the tribes of Assam and the eastern hill

region based on writings of Elwin (1960), Mankekar (1967), Anand (1968), and Kamleswar Sinha (1970).

Movements Among the Tribes of Chotanagpur

Fuchs (1965) has given us a reasonably well documented account of the movements among the tribes of this region. Equally informative details are available in the writings of Ghurye (1963), Edward Roy (1962), Vidyarthi (1964a; 1964b), Sachchidanand (1965), and others. A number of socio-religious and political movements have taken place, under different names, among almost all the tribes of this region.

Unlike the tribal movements of Assam and the eastern hill region, the movements in this part were mostly associated with particular charismatic leaders. The background of all these movements was almost identical: they all originated from reactions against local rulers and landlords, the support of the British administration to these rulers and landlords, and the government's intervention in the life of the tribals. All these movements were bound by a backlog of unfulfilled aspirations expressed in rebellious uprisings on the part of the tribals.

On careful analysis, however, the movements of these regions do show some internal variation. The movements of Chotanagpur region were more of the *reform* type, whereas those of the eastern region were of the revolutionary or revitalistic types. The movements in Chotanagpur show marked periods of dormancy or extinction, whereas the movements of the latter region maintained a definite continuity.

Some of the movements of this region are outlined below.

Birsa Movement. This movement was named after Birsa (1874-1900), a Munda by birth. He gave a lead to his people for socio-political emancipation and religious reform. This brought him titles like "An Adivasi Fighter for Freedom," "A Revolutionary," and "Dharti Aba (Lord of the Land or World)." He was often referred to as Bhagwan also.

Before Birsa, the Munda took up arms against the local landlords and the British administration in 1789, 1797, and 1832 to seek redress for the wrongs of landlords (Ghurye, 1963: 46). Violence erupted again in 1870, launched by a "pseudo-Christian" sect named Sardar. Hence this movement is known as the Sardar

movement. Militant revolts and general unrest among the Munda continued up to 1889-90.

Birsa led the first attack in 1895. Within five years, he became the embodiment of reform and reorganization among the Munda from within. The tirade and tussle of the Munda against the *diku* (outsiders) was kept alive until Birsa's death. He gave a call for open rebellion against the outsiders and in support of "no rent and better religion." To conclude:

> Birsa movement was an embodiment of the socio-economic and religious unrest among the Mundas. Buffeted by the waves of repression and oppression and torn by despair, the Mundas saw in Birsa a prophet, and a saviour. . . . Birsa's religion is a combination of Munda belief, Hinduism and Christianity. . . . The movement had such a tremendous impact that the foundation of British rule in Chotanagpur was shaken for some time (Sachchidanand, 1965 : 88).

Tana Bhagat Movement. The Tana Bhagat movement of the Oraon was started in 1913-14 under the leadership of Jatra, an Oraon by birth. The Oraon's background of socio-economic unrest and armed uprisings almost ran parallel to that of the Munda; with 1820, 1832, 1890, and 1895-1900 as years of notable rebellious incidents. The Tana Bhagat movement also represented attempts at reforming or reorganizing the society on the basis of a new charter of socio-religious ethics. It acquired political overtones in course of time. Jatra's message to his people was: abstain from meat-eating and drinking, have faith in only one God, give up faith in witchcraft, and so forth. The Tana Bhagat wore khadi and participated in the non-cooperation movement by non-payment of land rents.

The Sibu Bhagat, the Balram Bhagat, the Devamania or "Bom Bom," the Nemha Bhagat, the Bachi-dam Bhagat, and Kabirpanthi Bhagat represent local and sectional variations within a broad, common framework of Oraon socio-religious movements.

Santal, Ho, and Bhumij Movements. The Santal had permanent settlement in the year 1793 and following this a new class of landlords and exploiters came into existence in this tribe. This led to sharp reaction and manifest unrest. The Birsingh movement of

1854 was the first among the Santali movements. This was an organized revolt against local landlords. The year 1871 saw the upsurge of another comparable movement, known after its leader Bhagirath. The Bangam movement, in 1930, was the third in this order. This last movement was based more or less on Gandhian ideology.

The Ho were led by Buddho and the Bhumij by Ganganarain, in 1832, to rebel against local rajas and zamindars. Leuva (1963 : 114) in his study of the Asur has mentioned "a series of religious activities known as Bhagat movements. These were highly religious in nature and characterized by a combination of Hindu and tribal beliefs."

To sum up, the movements of this region shared a common genesis of loss of age-old ownership of or free access to land, and loss of the freedom of the forest. This resulted from the introduction of landlords and of the British administrative and legal system in these areas. Missionaries also arrived with the message of a new religious and cultural system. Local tribals identified them as diku (outsiders) and as a serious threat to their own socio-economic existence. This led to the outburst of violent resistance and the emergence of strong socio-political movements. These movements had a double purpose: to fight against outsiders and to reform their own societies. Ghurye (1963: 1-22) has described these reform movements as Hinduization of these tribes. Edward Roy (1962) called them revitalization movements. Fuchs (1965) presented them under a generic title of "messiah" movements. Vidyarthi (1964a: 151-152) has called them resistance movements and Sachchidanand (1965: 280-289) has designated them as revivalistic at some places and reformative at others. These labels are extremely tentative and, to a degree, conceptually confusing. Type determination does not appear to have been done with conceptual regions. There is need, therefore, for proper standardization of the classification of various movements.

Edward Roy (1962) sums up the functional characteristics of these movements as:

1) They are expression of great solidarity and social cohesion, and have acted as unifying forces for groups under conditions of social disorganization.

2) They represent attempts to establish a new moral order where the old one has been destroyed.

3) They have acted as mediators between Great and Little traditions of India, or, more broadly speaking, as catalysts of acculturation.

4) They have aided in the structuring of a new social system of which both Hindu and tribal societies are a part.

At the organizational, socio-religious, and ethical levels also these movements have much in common among them. They have well known leaders and charters of socio-religious norms or codes of conduct prescribing what to do and what not to do. What these movements stood for at the time of their emergence and what happened to them in terms of their objectives and methods in course of time, present a study in dramatic contrasts. According to Sachchidanand (1965: 209) "these movements have lost momentum but present day tribes are trying to recapture the glory of their ancient culture by reviving some of their dying institutions and investing them with new values." This needs detailed probing.

Movements Among Other Central Indian Tribes

Reported details about movements among other central Indian tribes are fewer in number. However, there are some references to movements among the Gond and the Bhil.

Fuchs (1965 : 3) has reported the occurrence of a number of reform movements aimed at Hinduizing the Gond in different parts of Gondland. These were initiated by the Gond and non-Gond leaders. Bhausing started one such reform movement in 1929. Rajnegi, inspired by the famous Gond historical character Rani Durgawati, started another. The Mahuwadeo movement came into being in 1945, prohibiting consumption of liquor. Inspired by the Sarguja famine of 1951, a humble and illiterate Gond woman, Rajmohini, came to the forefront to organize relief work among the Gond and this resulted in the emergence of the Rajmohini Devi movement. Rajmohini was a follower of Mahatma Gandhi. She founded an ashram at Govindpur, which became the centre of the activities of this movement. This movement also acquired reform overtones, but lost its momentum in course of time. Kalia(1962 : 49-61) has provided an informative case study of this movement.

The Bhil of Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh have a

long history of the emergence of a number of localized movements. According to Fuchs(1965: 238), "the Bhil movements are marked by a definite tendency towards Hinduization." Fuchs (1965: 238-252) has reported about a series of revolts—in Khandesh (1817-18), Dhar (1831), and Malwa (1846), Bhil revolts, and also about reform movements named after Lasodia (1890-1900), Govindgiri (1900), Gulia, Vishwanath, and Mavji. These movements spread into different Bhil areas. Naik (1956: 223-224) has also made brief references to reform campaigns led by Gulia Maharaj and Vishwanath in west Khandesh and Rewakantha respectively. Chauhan (1970: 18) has reported on the religious movements led by Mavji Maharaj and on a comparable movement led by Govindgiri. He has also mentioned a movement, at Malgarhi in 1933, demanding an autonomous Bhil state for the adivasis. This was put down by military action taken by the British.

The work of two non-Bhil leaders—Motilal Tejawat (Fuchs, 1965) and Mama Baleshwardayal (Mangal Mehta, 1972)—for socio-political emancipation of the Bhil merits detailed investigation.

Tribal Movements Elsewhere

Not many movements are reported for other tribal areas.

Bailey (1967: 432-433) speaks about the emergence of Kond nationalism and organized sanskritization activities among the Kond of Orissa.

Mahapatra(1968), concerned with the social movements among the tribes in eastern India with special reference to Orissa, has dealt with (i) sanskritization on the lines of caste practices, (ii) political party oriented movements and movements generated by political pressure groups, (iii) Christianization, and (iv) activities of the local tribes along the lines of the Jharkhand Party.

Raghaviah (1956: 25) has presented some information on the "well known and still remembered" Rampa rebellion of Ram Bhupati, which took place in a fairly extensive tribal area of Andhra Pradesh during 1802 and kept the tribal area of Andhra Pradesh disturbed for a long period till peace was restored in 1870.

The Contemporary Scene

So far we have discussed tribal movements of the pre-independence period, the details about which are drawn from secondary data.

The socio-economic and political developments after independence have provided a new impetus to the forces of dynamism in tribal India. The process of change has been marked by the emergency of movements of varied complexions. In some places, these have been positive and constructive; at others, they have been characterized by impassioned protests and organized violence. Tribals have either been submerged in the mainstream of national life or they are swinging between the two extremes of the demand for a better deal for themselves and the demand for separate statehood. Awareness of their socio-economic backwardness and aspirations for a better living have been constantly increasing among them.

While dealing with contemporary tribal unrest in India, Sachchidanand (1972b) has rightly hinted at the agrarian factors and the urge for maintaining a cultural identity as the root causes of tribal unrest. These phenomena are spread throughout the tribal areas. And, with the political culture of the tribals undergoing a radical transformation, that is, from a "subject political culture" to a "participant political culture," these are likely to influence the situations considerably.

Assam and the eastern hill states have their own problems, and despite many positive steps unrest among the tribals has not ended there. The Chotanagpur area had a strong movement for the creation of a Jharkhand state initiated by a political party (Vidyarthi, 1964a : 153-621; 1964b : 5-10; Mahapatra, 1968; Sachchidanand, 1972b). The tribes of Chhattisgarh and Gondwana regions of Madhya Pradesh also advanced the demand for a separate state in 1960 (for details see Ghurye, 1963: 338-339, 371). The Bastar region of Madhya Pradesh experienced tribal unrest, so much so that it was called the "sleeping giant" of India (Joshi, 1967). The Bhil too raised their voice for an autonomous state in the past (Chauhan, 1970: 18). The tribes of south Gujarat had also raised the slogan for a separate state (Desai, 1971 : 7-20). Almost similar demands were raised by the tribes of Bhandara district in Maharashtra in 1962 (Ghurye, 1963 : 374).

The recent political unrest and violence, known as the Naxalite movement in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh, added a new dimension to tribal unrest (Reddi, 1972; Naidu, 1972) in India. Naidu has well summed up the factors contributing to tribal revolt in Srikakulam district: (i) lack of sound administration at grassroots and absence ofsocial infrastructure, (ii) non-implementation of constitutional safeguards by the state and central governments, (iii) police indifference and exploitative behaviour of officials, (iv) non-protection of tribal land rights, (v) illegal collection of land revenve, (vi) illegal occupation of tribal land, and (vii) appropriation of agricultural and forest produce by landlords-cum-traders as well as political exploitation by non-tribal leaders in tribal villages.

This paper is based on materials contained in representative writings on the concept of social movements in general, and on the movements among the tribes in India in particular. An effort has been made to cover as many reported movements as were available. There is need to organize systematic studies focused on movements of the past as well as contemporary movements. While collecting data from all available sources, we should not hesitate to use the methods of history along with the tested methods of anthropology and sociology. Concept-formulation and delineation of types of movements also need standardization. Both theoretical and practical aspects of this work are important and should be given equal emphasis.

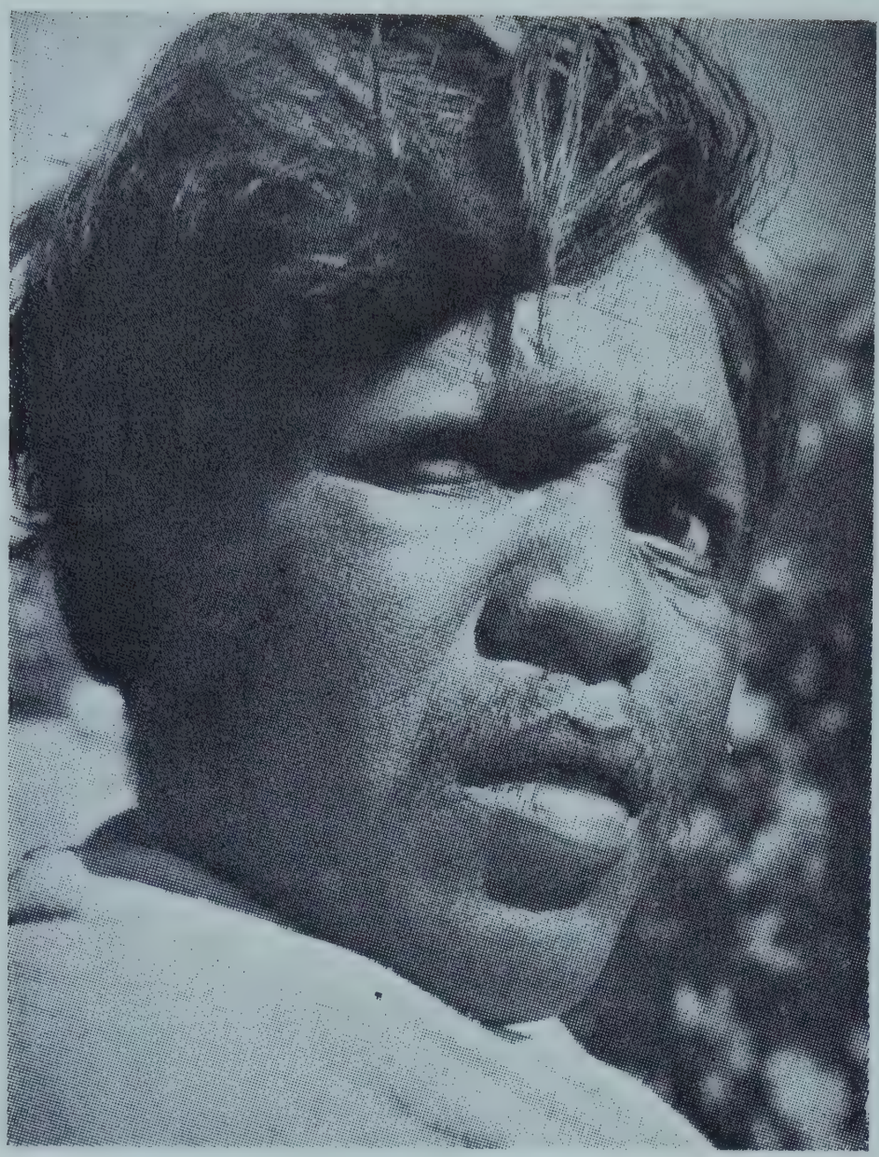
Kanikkar village settlement pattern

Gond village scene

A Lahaulee storing fodder for winter

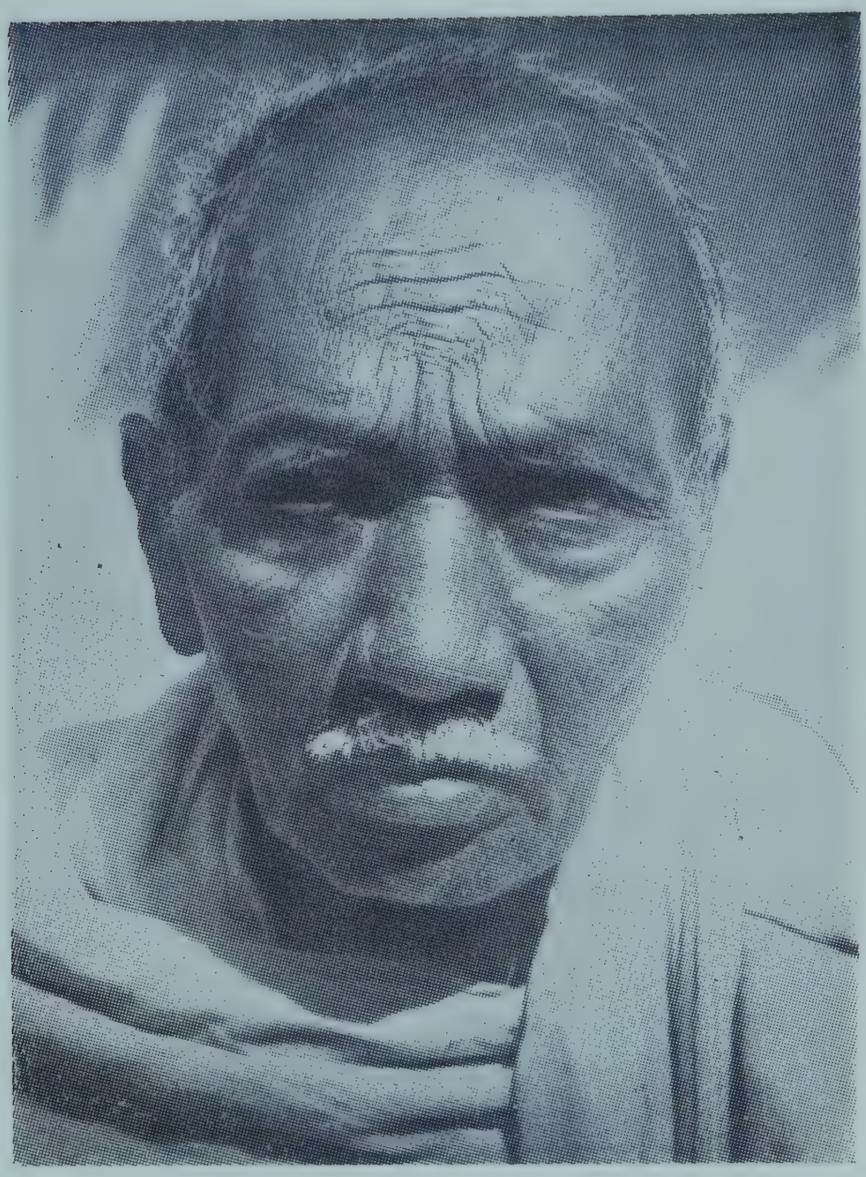
Spitiali lamas playing pipes for Devil dance

Bondo hills Bonda in dance sequence

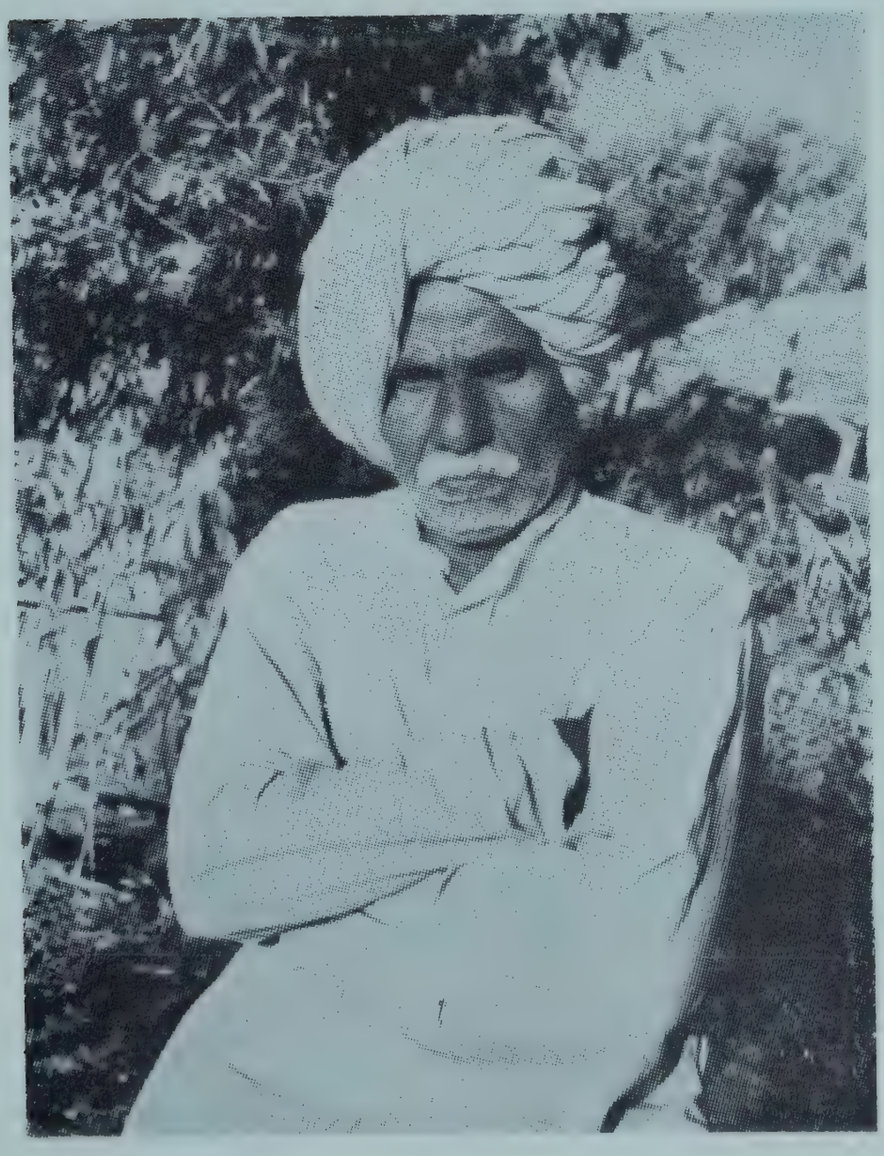


A Brihor youth

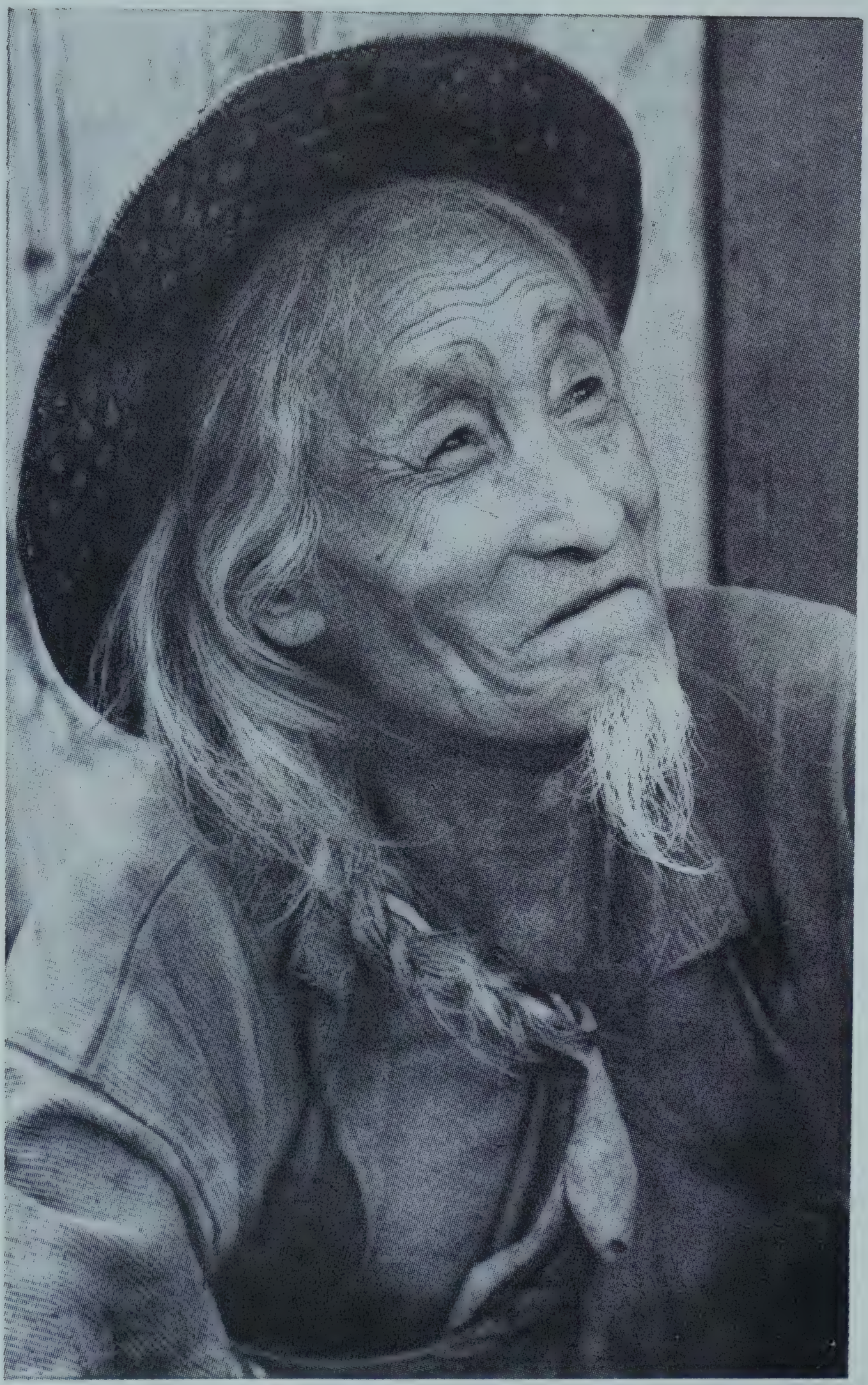
A typical Baiga



An aged Munda



A Kolam of Yeotmal district



A Lepcha with traditional hat

Agira tribal woman from Bastar smelting iron ore

Riang market place

Chindwara Gond woman preparing hood for bullock-cart

SURENDRA K. GUPTA

Traditional and Emerging Political Structures

INTERACTION between tribals and non-tribals started with the advent of the Aryans in India. This period has been identified by Surajit Sinha (1972) as the pre-British, pre-industrial, and pre-market phase. As a result of interaction, the tribals tried to emulate the cultural patterns of the Aryans. In due course the pattern of interaction between the advanced peasants and the residual tribes was guided by notions of "inter-cultural tolerance" or "indifference" about converting tribals to the so-called Aryan mode (Surajit Sinha, 1972 : 413).

The second phase of interaction between tribals and non-tribals started with the coming of the British to India. Surajit Sinha has divided this phase in two parts : the early (1776-1857) period and the late (1858-1947) period of British administration. While Aryans pushed the autochthones into remote areas and followed the policy of non-interference, the British tried to integrate these people into a wider society, by establishing "...a uniform network of law and order throughout their new empire" (Surajit Sinha, 1972). The policy of administrative integration adopted by the British, however, was resented by the tribes, and this led to a number of movements and revolts of varying intensity and frequency among different tribes. The most affected areas were the northeast frontier and central India. This period also witnessed the advent of European missionaries who served as a reference group for tribals converted to Christianity. The new tribal elites, who grew under the influence of the missionaries, started supporting a policy of independence and separation from the Hindu community. This period "was also marked by a faster trend towards incorporation of linguistic and cultural traits of Hindu

peasantry in the relatively less isolated tribes" (Surajit Sinha, 1972 : 414). It is necessary to emphasize that British policy was aimed at administrative integration and not at social integration. The creation of "excluded areas" and "partially excluded areas," though it gave some protection to the tribes, made their social integration difficult.

The third phase of integration between tribal and non-tribal groups started with independence. The introduction of adult franchise, the community development programme, and democratic decentralization has accelerated the acculturation process. Through these programmes the government has tried to bring these people into the mainstream of the country, though the success of these programmes in the tribal areas is a point of debate.

This essay reviews the changes in the traditional political structure of the tribes under the impact of the various forces. In this attempt the territorial classification of the tribals as given by Roy Burman (1972a : 39) has been followed.

TRIBES OF NORTHEAST INDIA

On the basis of the political history of different tribes, A. P. Sinha (1972 : 336) has classified the tribes of northeast India into three categories:

1) Areas which remained untouched or were scarcely touched by the British administration, and where traditional culture and political organization of tribes remained undisturbed. NEFA region comes in this category.

2) Areas which were in continuous conflict with the British. Naga hills and other regions come in this category.

3) Areas which after some initial resistance came under effective British administration. These include regions like the Khasi and Jaintia hills, the Garo hills, the Mikir hills, and the Mizo hills.

The process of annexation of the hill areas of Assam started in 1826, with the expulsion of the Burmese from Assam. Local people resisted the move and it resulted in a number of revolts. In all, there were thirty-seven revolts before independence in this area. In 1828, the Ahom were the first to revolt. Other tribes

which revolted against the British administration were the Lushei, the Singhpho, the Khasi, the Mishmi, the Kachari, the Dafla, and the people of Jaintia hills.

The annexation of these areas, completed in 1889, broke down the isolation of the tribes of this region and increased the interaction between tribals and non-tribals. New British laws came into force, but at the same time the tribals were also allowed to pursue their own laws. The powers of tribal chiefs and their councils were reduced and they were made subordinate to government officials and administrators. But the internal administration of the tribes was not disturbed. This autonomy of tribal chiefs was maintained in some matters, while for others new rules and regulations were enforced. The chiefs were also allowed to settle disputes and minor judicial cases. The British administration also helped in spreading Western education among the tribals.

On the eve of independence, the people of Garo and Khasi hills, besides those of Naga hills, also started a movement for separate and independent states. To press the demand of a separate hill state, the All Party Hill Leaders' Conference (APHLC) was formed in 1960. At the end of 1960 an offer for "...full autonomy for the Hill Districts, though within the overall administration of the state of Assam" (A. P. Sinha, 1972 : 343) was rejected by the APHLC. In 1968 the Government of India announced the reorganization of the state of Assam, with the provision for a separate hill state which would be autonomous in certain matters. A new state named Meghalaya was formed in 1970.

Pakhem (1972) classified the political history of the Jaintia tribes of Assam into three periods—the pre-British period, the British period, and the period after independence. During the pre-British period, the Jaintia had a three-tier system of government. At the top was a raja (*siem*). Below him there were provincial governors (*dallois*), and at the lowest level were the village headmen (*waheh chnong*). These functionaries worked according to popular opinion. The British retained the traditional democracy, but they curtailed the power of tribal chiefs. In the new system "...they became only the commission agents of the British while retaining a semblance of civil and criminal jurisdiction over petty matters" (Pakhem, 1972 : 354). After independence the powers of tribal chiefs were further reduced, though the

traditional democratic system was allowed to persist. The traditional raja, "who was substituted by the British subdivisional officer, gave way to the district council under the Sixth Schedule for tribal affairs and to the Indian subdivisional officer for other affairs" (Pakhem, 1972 : 354). As a result of these changes "new situations emerge when the traditional leadership has passed into the educated minority. The literate few then dominate not only the political scene but also the traditional chiefs who are now under their control. They also dominate the local press and make the people more perplexed with their news items" (Pakhem, 1972 : 359).

Roy Burman (1972b : 75) identified two types of political organization—authoritarian and republican—among the tribes of this region. The authoritarian type of government is found among the Garo and the Lushei of Assam; the Singhpho and the Khampti of Lohit district; the Nocte and the Wancho of Tirap district of NEFA; the Konyak, the Chang and the eastern Sema of Nagaland; the Kuki Chin group of Manipur; and the Reang, the Chakmas, and some others of Tripura. The republican type is found among the Monpa, the Akas, the Sherdukpen, the Tangsa, and the Adi group of tribes of NEFA and the Angami of Nagaland. According to Roy Burman's classification, the Khasi and the Ao Naga fall in between these two types.

Describing the changes in the political organization of these tribes, especially in the authoritarian type, Roy Burman writes that in recent years their chiefs were subjected to great pressure.

> For instance, in 1953, by an Act passed on the recommendation of the District Council of Mizo Hills, Chiefship was abolished. In Manipur, the educated Kuki were also challenging the authority of the chief; but it seems that they did not wield effective political organization to isolate the chiefs, who continued to wield considerable influence. In 1967, when the rights of the chiefs were abolished by an Act passed by the Manipur Assembly, the chiefs could rally the entire community in their support (Roy Burman, 1972b : 75).

The political organization and changes in the traditional political system of some of the tribes of this region will now be outlined.

The Khasi. The Khasi are a matrilineal tribe living in the Khasi and Jaintia hills of the state of Meghalaya. The political organization of the Khasi is based on an elaborate system of state, its chief, and a council of ministers.

> At one period of history the whole country is said to have been united into one kingdom. . . . In course of time split brought the development of two independent kingdoms: Khasi and Jaintia. Each was subsequently divided into numerous political units. At present the Khasi hill division alone has 25 native states. A Khasi state has been formed by the voluntary association of villages or groups of villages (Bhowmik, 1971 : 143).

Each Khasi state is headed by a chief who is locally known as Siem. He is assisted by a council of ministers. A chief has to perform both secular and sacred duties. He acts as the principal priest in state ceremonies. Other duties performed by him include maintenance of village paths, employment of watchers for fruit groves, assessment of tax, etc. According to Bhowmik :

> The rule of succession to the office of *Siem* is not altogether away from the matrilineal sentiment of the people, though a Khasi chief is always a man. The matrilineal principle is followed in such a way that a *Siem* is always succeeded by the eldest son of his eldest sister. Originally the succession to a *Siem*ship was controlled by a small electoral body. This body was constituted of the heads of certain priestly clans who had the power to reject candidates mainly on religious grounds. At present the whole adult population takes part in the election of *Siem* (Bhowmik, 1971 : 144).

The Garo. Each Garo village community is an autonomous political unit. It is headed by the Nokma. This post is hereditary and is transmitted through the *nok* institution. The Nokma's nokrom is his successor. The office of Nokma is the pivot of the village organization. He plays a leading role in all village activities. However, the Nokma does not possess any political authority.

In the absence of political authority, the village community,

the households of which have basically socially and economically equalitarian status, tends to have a somewhat delicately balanced temporal internal rank-order or power-relationship among the families resulting from various given factors. The following are the major factors: the higher prestige for the pedigree of older nok; the nearness to the descent line of the women to the wives of precedent nokma; the advantage of and respect paid to the age of the head of nok; friendly support given by more adult males (heads of nok); economic and social capacity and achievement as the head of the nok, as a rich man and a man of leadership. The last factor is essential; when a man has this quality in greater measure than the rest of the villagers, combined with any one of the factors mentioned, he is a very powerful figure (Nakane, 1967 : 62-63).

Though the position of Nokma is only one of prestige, it helps an individual or a group in the accumulation of political power.

The Dafla. The Dafla occupy a vast stretch of hills and forest which roughly cover the western half of the Subansiri division of NEFA. Among the Dafla there are no recognized chiefs nor a council of elders. The only source of cohesion among the Dafla is their feeling of oneness through blood. The people who commit offences are left to themselves without the interference of society. Though the Dafla do not have any chief or the council of elders, anarchy is absent because of two important reasons:

Firstly, the co-existence of the several clans and groups of people in the same area compels them to conform to a certain peaceful standard and the social sanctions, such as public opinion, aid in this.

Secondly, the services of the go-between are universally recognized and accepted. Undoubtedly, they have no political power, nor can they enforce their decisions. Their success lies in a free and serious discussion with persuasion resulting in unanimous agreements or decisions (Shukla, 1969 : 88-89).

The Purum. The Purum constitute the smallest group among the Kuki tribes. They are located on the westernmost range of hills which separates Manipur from Burma.

Politically, the Purum villages are independent of each other.

There are eight hereditary village officers who look after the affairs of the community. These officials are called Khullakpa (the headman), Luplakpa, Kunjahanpa, Pakhanlakpa, Zupanpa, Keirungba, Selungba, and Changlai. When a post falls vacant it is filled by the next lower officer. A new man is recruited for the lowest post. If the headman leaves a son behind, then he occupies the lowest post. In the absence of any son, the post is filled by a male member of his clan. If all the posts fall vacant at the same time, then the villagers meet together and select the Khullakpa first. In the selection, unanimity is preferred, but the majority opinion is taken into account if there is any dispute.

After the arrival of the British the village officers among the Purum lost power and dignity associated with their positions. Traditionally the Purum led a nomadic life, but with the advent of British rule they took to a settled and peaceful life. Most of the village officials became figureheads. Now they are expected to perform some duties which they do not like and which also come in the way of the pursuit of their occupations.

Their interaction with the new system has forced these people also to adopt the new laws. In consequence, some of their customary laws have practically died out (T.C. Das, 1945).

The Tangsa. The Tangsa, and a number of sub-tribes, inhabit the eastern hills of the central part of the Tirap frontier division along the Indo-Burmese border.

The Tangsa council is called by different names, among different groups, such as Khaphna, Khapong and Khapo. The council consists of a leader known as Lungwang, Ngowa, or Lowang, and a few members. The members are called Sangta, Kamba, or Dedwa. The members as well as the leader are chosen by the villagers. The leader is selected from a particular clan and the members represent the other clans.

The council is the main body to adjudicate all disputes. It is also responsible for maintaining law and order in the village. The verdict given by the council is considered to be decisive and final (Parul Dutta, 1959).

The Konyak Naga. The villages of the Konyak Naga are large social units divided into wards. These wards are more closely knit social units than the village. Each ward has a number of patrilineal clans, and these are again subdivided into lineages.

The Konyak Naga are divided into three unequal social classes

as the chiefs, commoners, and an intermediate group. The village council consists of a chief and ten *morung* officials known as the Neiengba. This council settles disputes and punishes the offenders on the breach of taboos concerning the community as a whole. The council also takes decisions regarding rituals and cremonials. All the posts in the council are hereditary (adapted from Furer-Haimendorf, 1969).

The Ao Naga. The Ao Naga are an important section of the Naga tribes. Among this tribe, the village affairs are organized in two ways: "(i) the various communal duties are assigned to different age groups and (ii) a council is empowered to control the various activities of the village" (Bhowmik, 1971 : 58). The council is entrusted with the task of settling all disputes and quarrels arising in the village. The method of election of the councillors, as well as their tenure of office, vary in different groups. No study has been done about the interaction between the traditional system among the Ao Naga and the new emerging system.

TRIBES OF NORTH AND NORTHWEST INDIA

This region comprises the tribes of the northern districts of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir. "In the state of Jammu and Kashmir, Gujjars and Bakarwals constitute the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, though they are not scheduled as tribes" (Dhir, 1972 : 130). The tribes in Himachal Pradesh are the Konnora (spelt also as Kinnaura or Kanaura), the Gaddi, the Gujjar, the Jad, the Lamba, the Khanpa, the Lahaula, the Pangwala, the Swangla, and the Bhot or Bodh. The tribes in Uttar Pradesh are the Tharu, the Korma, the Bhuksa, the Kanjara, the Dom, and the Bhatu.

Of the tribes living in Himachal Pradesh, the Konnora are is the largest and constitute 20.4 per cent of the total tribal population of this area. As far as interaction with the outside world is concerned, these people have been the most exposed, followed by the Lahaula. The tribes of Himachal Pradesh were either under British rule or were ruled by princes.

Describing the impact of the introduction of the new democratic system, Negi says:

> ... democracy at the panchayat level has, in many cases, been

vitiated by corruption and/or inefficiency on the part both of the people's representatives themselves and the officials. Wherever this has not happened, the people have appreciated the good in panchayats. Higher democracy began as a remote thing to the tribalp eople, their main test of a good or bad government being the type of the government servants with whom they had to deal. . . . By and large the tribal people have now come to respond warmly to the call of democracy (T.S. Negi, 1972 : 155-156).

The Bhuksa. The Bhuksa tribe is spread over three hundred villages of Nainital district of Uttar Pradesh. It is divided into three different units. These units are free from any outside pressure and also have their own geographical boundaries. Before 1953, the affairs of this tribe were managed by an indigenous political institution called Biradari Panchayat.

The Biradari Panchayat consists of five office bearers. The highest in order is a chief called Takhat, followed by the Munsif (an official for judicial advice), the Daroga (an escorting official to carry out the chief's orders), and two Sipahis (who assist the escorting official in making arrests). In addition to this inter-village organization, there is a separate council at the village level. The head of this council is knwon as Mukhiya. The Mukhiya decides all cases pertaining to family partitions, inheritance, quarrels, and other similar disputes. All the offices in the village and the inter-village council are herditary, the eldest son succeeding the father.

With the introduction of the democratic system and adult franchise, a change has been noticed in the powers and privileges of the Takhat among the Bhuksa.

During the first five year plan period, the new political system, divided into three vertically inter-connected institutions, namely, the Gram Sabha at the village level, the Gram Panchayat (executive Panchayat) at the level of single village or more (depending upon the size of the population), and Nyaya Panchayat (Judicial Panchayat) at the area level (which com bined several village Panchayats) was brought into existence. This impersonalized parliamentary set up had its serious repercussions on the normal functioning of the tradition-

governed political institutions which were hitherto effective in the maintenance of peace and social order within the community (Banvir Singh, 1969 : 320).

The Tharu. The Tharu of Naini Tal district of Uttar Pradesh have been studied by Srivastava (1958). They do not have a common authority for the whole tribe. Among them a tribal council, which settles disputes, is not a permanent feature. It is formed on each occasion by the representatives of both the contending parties. It is headed by a Sarpanch. In dealing with disputes it follows the tribal customs and conventions. The decision is taken by the Sarpanch in consultation with other members. Punishment is invariably in the form of a fine, excommunication, or purification and penalty feast.

With the enforcement of the Gaon Panchayat Act of Uttar Pradesh, some of the disputes are now settled by the Gaon Adalat (village court), but the tribal panchayat is still recognized as the custodian of law and morals.

The Korwa. The Korwa are found in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh (D. N. Majumdar, 1944a). In their council, women and children can also participate in the deliberations. The elders share their power with the rest of the tribe. The titular head of the council invites all persons of the village for discussions and the matter is discussed freely and the decision taken unanimously.

TRIBES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN INDIA

This region includes West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh. The situation in each of these states is described separately.

The Tribes of Bihar. The tribals of Bihar came into contact with the non-tribal Hindus and Muslim several centuries ago. The non-tribal people have been living side by side with the tribals in the villages. The tribals come into contact with outsiders at the weekly markets also. The frequent visits of government officials since independence, industrialization, and rapid growth of education have also helped in breaking the isolation of the tribes.

The tribes of Bihar—the Ho, the Kharia, the Munda, the Oraon, and the Santal—have a well developed traditional leadership headed by secular and sacred leaders. They are known by

different names among different tribes. The office of the secular head is hereditary while the sacred headman is chosen from a particular family.

A number of villages form an organization called Parha. The Parha panchayat is a social, judicial, and political body and settles disputes between villages and people of different villages. The head of this organization is known as Pargana or Pir. For a variety of reasons these bodies are losing their power and prestige.

> During British rule and in the years immediately following, these traditional leaders enjoyed tremendous authority and wielded effective power in the tribal community. But gradually with the decay of Parha panchayat, village panchayat, introduction of government panchayat, withdrawal of police and revenue powers, growth of education and of the new rich class and breakdown of the social solidarity of the village the traditional leaders have lost much of their influence and prestige (Sachchidanand, 1972a: 174).

The tribes of this region produced a number of leaders who organized a number of significant social movements. In the 19th century a number of traditional leaders led the resistance movements of various tribes. Among the Munda, such movements were organized in 1820, 1832, and 1860; among the Oraon in 1820, 1832, and 1890; and among the Santal in 1855.

These traditional leaders were ". . .rural-bred, charismatic and religious in their approach. They were not educated but were supposed to have received divine guidance through dreams or otherwise to lead the masses" (Vidyarthi, 1967 : 129-130). With the impact of missionaries the leadership pattern has changed in the last fifty years and ". . .thele adership of the tribals has passed to the hands of the western educated, urban-bred Christian tribals who are essentially rational in interpreting and tackling a political situation" (Vidyarthi, 1967 : 130).

Of the various movements in Bihar, the Jharkhand movement has been the most popular. Vidyarthi has divided this movement into three phases of development: (i) the formulatory phase of the Christian students' philanthropic movements, (ii) the constructive phase of movement for social economic uplift,

and (iii) the elaborate phase of political movement. In 1963, the Jharkhand Party merged with the Congress and lost its identity.

Among the Ho the headman is known as Manki. He is selected on the basis of the influence he has in his neighbourhood. The general consent of the inhabitants of the villages over which he is to be placed is also taken into account. Nowadays a Manki decides only the cases of adultery and of desertion by a wife. Earlier he used to try civil and criminal cases also.

There are various sections among the Kharia and each section is known by a different name. These are the Hill Kharia, the Dhelki Kharia, and the Dudh Kharia. The inter-village panchayat of the Hill Kharia is known as Bhira. Its head is called Dandia. The eldest and wisest of all the village headmen, it is said, is selected as the Dandia. The Dhelki Kharia do not have a permanent panchayat. They only have occasional inter-village gatherings called Parha or Kutumb Sabha. The Parha of the Dudh Kharia consists of villages of different clans. The village headman is known as Kartaha. The office of the headman is hereditary. The main function of these panchayats, among all sections of the Kharia, is the readmission of ostracized persons into the tribal fold.

The Munda have two kinds of village unions: the Bhumhari Patti, which became a part of the realm of the raja of Chotanagpur, and the Khutkatti Patti, which consisted of people who wanted to be free of the raja's rule. "In the Bhumhari area, the Parha Panchayat is a fixed body with a permanent chief styled as Raja or Maharaja and a permanent staff of officers. In the Khutkatti area, on the other hand, the Panchayat is neither a fixed body nor has it, except for its President called the Pat Munda, any permanent officers" (Sachchidanand, 1968 : 125). The positions in the Parha panchayat are hereditary, the eldest son succeeding the father. The Parha panchayats hear cases of the breach of marriage laws and other social norms.

The number of villages forming a Parha among the Oraon ranges from five to twenty. Among them "the Parha is a loose confederacy of a number of neighbouring villages with a central organization known as the Parha Panch" (Sachchidanand, 1968: 132). Besides protecting the allied villages from human and supernatural enemies, it also helps in providing for the spiritual

and social welfare of the Parha community.

The villages of the Santal Pargana are presided over by an officer known as Parganait. "The village headmen of the Pargana together with the Parganait and elders of the villages make up the body of the Pargana Panchayat. The council hears appeals from the decisions of the village headmen" (Sachchidanand, 1968 : 137).

The Santal political organization is characterized by a village council. The council is expected to take decisions in respect of all matters concerning the village community. If it is unable to decide a case, a meeting of all the adult members of the village community is held. Generally a decision is taken by consensus. However, in some cases a decision favoured by the majority is also accepted. The officers of the council are the Manjhi (the headman) who is assisted by a Paranik (the assistant headman), the Naeke (village priest), the Jog-Manjhi (the moral guardian of the village youth), the Jog-Paranik (the assistant to the priest), and the Godet (the messenger). These officials of the council are elected customarily at the time of the foundation of a village. Later succession to these offices is hereditary. Usually the eldest son succeeds the father. The village community forms part of a larger political group. The leader of the larger group is known as Parganait. He is one of the headmen. He is assisted by the Des Manjhi and a council of headmen of all the villages.

The tribal villages of Bihar are also part of at least three contemporary administrative agencies, in addition to their traditional tribal groupings. These agencies are the police station, the statutory panchayat, and the community development block. "In Bihar the Panchayats were organized on a statutory basis from 1947. By now, large parts of Chotanagpur and Santal Parganas have come under the operation of the Bihar Panchayat Raj Act" (Sachchidanand, 1968 :144). The introduction of the new system has not altered the traditional pattern in those areas where both village panchayats and the Parha are still in operation. In these villages, all social offences are still handled by the villagers themselves and ". . .only cognizable offences are taken to the statutory panchayats" (Sachchidanand, 1968 : 145).

To find out the changes in the traditional modes and patterns of leadership, Sachchidanand conducted a survey in an Oraon

village. The village is inhabited by 105 families belonging to tribal and other groups. Traditionally the village had three leaders: the Pahan (sacred leader), the Mahto (secular), and the Pujar (Pahan's assistant). Earlier, the Dhumkuria provided a training ground for future leaders.

Before the introduction of statutory panchayats, the power and influence in the village were shared by the Pahan, the traditional panchayat, and the village chowkidar. In the traditional panchayat the Pahan used to take decisions in consultation with other adults. The introduction of statutory panchayats and the community development programme have changed the power structure of the village. They brought a number of changes in the villages and limited the decision-making power of the traditional leaders.

The studies of two Oraon villages by Sachchidanand (1964a) and Mrinal Roy (1967) have shown that leadership plays an important role in bringing change. If the leader is dynamic and is the first to accept changes, people will follow him easily and such a leader can be more effective than any other factor.

SOME TRIBES OF MADHYA PRADESH

The Gond are a well known tribe of this region. Another tribe of this region, for which adequate ethnography exists, are the Kamar. Danda (1971a) has studied the political organization of the tribes found in the Chhattisgarh region of Madhya Pradesh. Besides these, Jay (1967) has examined the leadership and external relations among the Hill Maria Gond.

The Gond. The generic name Gond is applied to a set of culturally divergent groups of tribes of central India. The affairs of the Gonds of Bastar are settled by the panchayat or village council composed of a set of officials. Some of these officials carry on secular duties, while others perform sacred duties. Each council has three secular and three sacred officials. The secular officials are known as the Peda (headman), Kandki (assistant headman), and the Kotwar (a lower level functionary who carries out orders). The sacred officials are known as the Bhum-gaita (the chief priest), the Waddai (the clan priest), and the Gunia (the medicine man). Earlier, this council was res-

ponsible for all the affairs of the village community. The inter-village organization, known as Pargana, is a territorially defined unit of administration. It has a number of villages under its jurisdiction. The chief of this council is the Pargana Manjhi. He selects four other village headmen to assist him in regulating the Pargana affairs.

The Gond of the eastern part of Mandla district have a different kind of political organization. There a panchayat consists of a number of neighbouring Tolas or hamlets. The chief of the council is called Patel or Mukkaddam. Other members of the panchayat, known as Syana, are the leaders of each hamlet. The succession to the post is always hereditary, the eldest son succeeding the father (Stephen Fuches, 1960).

The Kamar. The Kamar are mainly concentrated in the Raipur district of Madhya Pradesh. They do not have a common authority for the tribe as a whole. In the various territorial units, a number of Kamar groups come close to one another and form one larger group. Each such group has a panchayat of its own. The highest office is that of Kurha(chief), followed by a Sarpanch (presiding officer), and a Chaprasi (peon). According to Dube (1951) this administrative paraphernalia is largely superficial. The membership of the tribal panchayat is determined invariably by age, experience, personality, and ability of the individuals. The introduction of an elaborate administrative machine by the government has greatly modified the administrative system of the Kamar. Besides their customary law, the Kamar now have also to abide by the Indian Penal Code. They have also started participating in the panchayats of the larger village community in inter-village disputes.

The Pando. Among the Pando, at the village level, the council is headed by a tutelary head called the Mukhia. He is assisted by adult male co-villagers in the performance of his functions. The council also engages a messenger, but he is not appointed on a permanent basis. Their inter-village council, Bara Darbar, has ten villages under its jurisdiction. The chiefs of these villages are the members of this council. Its meetings are presided over by the headman of the village where the council happens to meet. In addition to these two councils, the Pando also have an undifferentiated intermediate tier known as Darbar. This intermediate body consists of five villages. Its function is to

arrange feasts in recognition of marriages by elopement and intrusion.

Among the Pando, the priest and the Mukhia are two well differentiated offices, though in some villages one person occupies both these posts. The post of headman is hereditary, but it is not necessary that the eldest son should inherit it. Any son having the requisite qualities can succeed his father. The headman also acts on behalf of the revenue department of the state government.

The regional council deals with all threats to the solidarity of the tribe. The smaller councils settle intra-tribal cases. The introduction of statutory panchayat by the state government has not affected these people so far.

The Korwa. The Korwa village government is headed by the Mukhia, who is only a tutelary head. He has two assistants, an Ohodar and a Bhot.

The offices of the priest and the diviner, among the Korwa, are well differentiated. There are only a few villages where the headman also acts as the priest as well as the diviner. Some of the Korwa villages do not have a Mukhia. In such cases one Mukhia may look after several villages. The Mukhia is also recognized by the revenue department of the state government.

The inter-village council among the Korwa has two parallel offices—the Lotadar and the Jamadar. The traditional chief of this council is a Lotadar and he has to perform both secular and sacred duties. The function of the Jamadar is to maintain law and order in the region. The post of Lotadar is hereditary. He has three Sipahi (footmen) to assist him in his work. According to a recent study the

> introduction of statutory Panchayat multiplied in the confusion of Korwa authority structure. At certain situations open competition has replaced the spirit of consensus or unanimity. This is more so in case of election of *Panchayat Raj* offices. Sometimes a Panch, a member of the statutory council, overspreads his authority in the domain of the Mukhia. Another factor that contributes to the confusion is the unspecified tenure of the statutory offices. As the Korwa are not much aware of the latter phenomenon, often they retain and use the position when they no longer have it (Danda, 1971a: 18).

The Khairwar. The Mukhia is the head of the village organization of the Khairwar. He is assisted by a Pradhan (the assistant headman), and the council of the Siana (the male elders of the village). The Mukhia is also appointed by the revenue department to act as a Patel. The Pradhan is appointed by the Mukhia, with the consent of the village council. Intra-village disputes are settled by the Mukhia.

The inter-village council, known as Jati Panchayat, is headed by the Mahato. It has about twelve villages under its jurisdiction. The Siana of the tribe play an important part in the election of the Mahato. The emphasis is on unanimity, although decisions are taken occasionally on the basis of majority. All inter-village disputes are settled by the Mahato.

Though the state government has introduced statutory panchayats in this region, they have not affected these people so far. But some people have started showing interest in occupying positions of power in the statutory body (adapted from A. K. Danda, 1971a:19).

The Pardhan. The village government among the Pardhan is headed by a Mukhia. He is assisted by two deputies known as Siana. Other members of the council are a Nangi and a Jogi. Their function is to assist the headman. The post of Mukhia is hereditary. The Siana are appointed by the Mukhia, with the consent of the male elders of the village. The posts of Nangi and Jogi also are filled in this manner.

There are twelve villages in the inter-village council of the Pardhan. The head of this council is known as Dewan. He is assisted by two persons known as Sipahi.

While the Mukhia looks after the affairs of the village, the functions of the Dewan are not specified. The cases which cannot be decided at the village level are referred to the Dewan.

The introduction of panchayati raj has brought little change among the Pardhan. Earlier, the village leaders were selected unanimously, but now consensus has taken its place. The villagers have also started competing for statutory offices (adapted from A. K. Danda, 1971a: 20-21).

The Nagesia. Among the Nagesia, there is no overlapping between secular and sacred institutions. "The two tier authority structure of the Nagesia forms a combination of nearly well differentiated institutions, elaborate mechanism for dispersal of

power, more or less sharply defined diversification of professions, and almost discrete distribution of roles" (Danda, 1971a : 21).

The Mukhia is the head of the village government. He has an assistant known as Pradhan. The Pradhan has two functionaries, Bargah and Kotwar, under his control. The elderly males of the village select their Mukhia. He also acts on behalf of the revenue department of the state government.

The inter-village body is headed by Mahato-mahan. He is assisted by the Dewan and a council consisting of twenty to twenty-five Mukhia.

Danda has observed some regional variations in the inter-village political structure of the Nagesia. According to him:

> In Jashpur area the regional council headed by Mahan extends its authority . . . through another officer locally known as Chaprash. For every two or three Nagesia villages there is a Chaprash who acts as a liaison between the village authority and the regional authority. At the village level also the tutelary head is Mahato and not Mukhia (Danda, 1971a : 22).

Earlier, the post of Mahato was hereditary and some land was attached to it. The pattern of the appointment of Mahato was changed, when the land attached to the post was permanently recorded in the name of one particular Mahato. Now, the Mahato and the Dewan are both elected by Mukhia/Chaprash of villages under its jurisdiction; the male elders also participate in this election.

The introduction of panchayati raj has not altered the ". . .traditional posts, their sources of power, tenure, and mode of transmission" (Danda, 1971a : 23). The statutory council deals both with village and inter-village cases. "Trends of multicentrism are visible in the election of such posts and in certain areas the traditional and statutory bodies compete with each other for power" (Danda, 1971a : 23).

The Kawar. The village council among the Kawar is known as Gaon Darbar. It is a secular institution. It comprises the Mukhia, the Bhot, the Pradhan, and a council of Siana and other elder males of the village. The council has two servants, Bargah and Kotwar. The post of Mukhia is hereditary. A Bhot is nominated by the Mukhia and the Pradhan is elected by the village

council. Both Bargah and Kotwar are appointed by the Mukhia.

The sacred functions are performed by the Baiga (priest), the Pujar (assistant priest), and the Dewir (sorcerer-cum-diviner).

With the introduction of the community development programme, two new positions of Dalpati and Updalpati have been added to the village council.

The Kawar regional council, which is known as Jat Darbar, is headed by a Dewan. He is assisted by a Majhi, an Ohodar, an assistant Ohodar, three Sipahi, and the council of village Mukhia. All these persons, except the Sipahi, are elected. Unicentrism prevails in all these elections. The posts of Sipahi are filled by the Jat Darbar. "Introduction of statutory *Panchayats* has not in any way altered the functioning of the traditional authority structure. The new posts have been accommodated in the traditional structure in such a way that they act in unison in the smooth functioning of the traditional government" (Danda, 1971a : 24).

The Kodaku. There are four important officials in the traditional government of the Kodaku. They are the Mukhia (the recognized head); the Jati Pradhan (a secular position ranked below the village chief); the Baiga (priest); and the Alwa (assistant to the priest). The Baiga appears to enjoy more confidence of the people than the Mukhia. This is so because "in Kodaku culture the capacity to control supernatural powers, which is the domain of the Baiga, is rated higher than the capacity to control mundane human relations" (Danda, 1971a: 15). The Baiga also knows the arts of sorcery and divination.

Danda has found some ambiguities in role specializations in the Kodaku culture.

> Though there are two separate offices like *Baiga* (priest) and *Dewar* (diviner-cum-medicine man), always the same individual was found occupying both the posts. Again, *Jati Pradhan* who occupies a lower position in the traditional authority structure than the *Mukhia*, sometimes enjoys more confidence of the people than the latter. Theoretically a *Mukhia* is responsible for regulating the deal of his villagers with outsiders, though in practice most of it is done by individuals concerned. The *Jati Pradhan* generally manages intra-village affairs. The source of

power of the two officers are also to some extent responsible for the state of affairs (Danda, 1971a : 15-16).

The introduction of panchayati raj and adult franchise have not affected these people at all as they do not understand the meaning and importance of the democratic process.

The Hill Maria. The village studied by Jay (1967) had three kinds of networks: the "village" political network, the "tribal" network, and the "administrative" network of the government. Besides the organization of individual villages, a number of villages are grouped together into parganas. Each pargana is headed by a nominal head. In earlier times the paragana was one of the most important organizations, but now it has lost its importance.

Each Maria village is headed by a Patel. He is the symbolic head of the village, but without any decision-making authority. The decisions are taken by all adults during an informal meeting. The Patels act as the spokesmen of their villages. The Patel gets respect from other adults because he is the principal link between them and the rest of the administrative network.

TRIBES OF ORISSA

Some of the tribes of this state are contiguous with those of the neighbouring states of Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Bihar. In Orissa also, the tribals revolted against alien rule in the 19th century. In 1879 and 1880, the Koya rose against the administration. The Khond of Phulbani revolted in 1850. The Saora revolted twice, in 1890 and 1940.

Among the tribes of this region we find an organized political life with spatial delimitation. The sorcerers and witch doctors have their hold on the tribals, both in the sacred and profane ambits.

The introduction of panchayati raj gave a new perspective to these tribes. But most of them do not understand the significance of the new system and sometimes non-tribals, who have little contact with tribals, are elected to new posts. In consequence, most of the tribals are passing through a transitional phase, where the traditional leadership has lost its hold and the elected

leadership is yet to establish itself in an effective way.

Bailey (1957-58) has described political change in the Kondmals. Three distinct structures can be perceived there: tribal organization, caste system, and the system provided by the bureaucratic administration. Bailey has summarized the political structure of the first two groups as follows:

> There are first the Kond institutions and the Kond political society in which the main cleavages lay between localized composite clans, using the idiom of agnation. Secondly, there are Oriya settlements, internally organized on the basis of caste and externally forming an egalitarian segmentary system like that of the Konds, the key category being the dominant warrior group (Bailey, 1957-58 : 96).

After the advent of the British, in the Kond hills, in 1850, a regular civilian administration was formed in the area in 1855. The new administration upset the balance between the Kond and the Oriyas which had existed for a number of years. In the new administration the powers were given to the Oriyas. It also effected the expansion of Kond territory and gave the right to protect land to the administration.

Aiyappan (1965) has described the leadership pattern among two tribes, the Kisan and the Koya, of Orissa. The Kisan are a Dravidian-speaking tribe living in Sundergarh and Sambalpur districts of Orissa. The traditional leader among them was Bariha, who was assigned only social duties and had very little administrative, revenue or judicial work. After the arrival of the British administration, the powers of Bariha were further reduced. Panigiri or Ghata Bariha is another Kisan functionary who exercises a measure of social control. He helps in the maintenance of the tribal norms at the inter-village level. His influence is also on the decline.

With the introduction of the gram panchayats, persons with good economic status, based on land ownership, literary or Puranic scholarship, medical and other traditional knowledge, contact with courts and the world outside, and having the "gift of the god" are occupying new leadership positions.

The Koya have the Pedda as the traditional leader. Earlier he had the power to dispose of the village land, but now this power

has been curtailed. He continues to control social, political, and religious activities.

TRIBES OF WEST BENGAL

The Mahali of Midnapur district and the Oraon of Sunderban are the two tribes discussed here. The Mahali have been studied by Sengupta (1970) and the Oraon by Das and Raha (1963).

Traditionally, the Mahali are bamboo workers. Their council, which looks after the administration of justice and settles disputes—among individuals, families, and groups—is called Bichar Sabha. It consists of all adult males. Three important office bearers of this council are the Majhi Haram (the headman of the village), the Gorait (the village messenger who acts as an assistant to Majhi Haram), and the Paranik (the deputy headman). These three posts are hereditary.

In addition to the Mahali council, the state government has also introduced the gram sabha or village panchayat. Earlier, the Mahali council was the sole arbitrator of intra-community disputes, but nowadays some people have started reporting their grievances to the local police also. With increasing political activities in this area, the Mahali have started taking advice from the leaders of the political parties. These leaders also help the people to lodge complaints with the police.

Formerly the Oraon of Sunderban had a full-fledged gram panchayat (village council) as well as a Parha panchayat (inter-village council). Now the inter-village council has become almost defunct and the village council deals only with minor socio-religious disputes. The latter can exert its influence only over the people of a village. The headman and his assistant take decisions in consultation with other members.

With increasing contacts with the outside world, the Oraon have started taking recourse to law courts to settle their disputes.

TRIBES OF ANDHRA PRADESH

In Andhra Pradesh tribal revolts erupted on four different occasions. The first revolt was in 1802-03, the second in 1879, the

third in 1968, which continued up to 1970; and the last revolt took place under the leadership of the Naxalites. The main reason underlying these revolts was the economic and political exploitation of the tribes by non-tribal people. The non-tribals acted as the mouthpiece of various parties and helped them to win elections. Thus they got support from the government and utilized it to their own benefit. The non-tribals also tried to gain power in local elections (adapted from V. Raghaviah, 1971).

The Chenchu are a semi-nomadic tribe found mainly in Andhra Pradesh. They are also sporadically distributed in Karnataka, Orissa, and Tamil Nadu. The village council among the Chenchu is headed by a Peddamanchi. The elders of all kin-groups in the village are the members of this body. It settles the cases of adultery, quarrel, crime, and other disputes. Nothing has been reported about its interaction with the new emerging political structure.

Tribes of South India

Anthropologically, the best known tribe in this region are the polyandrous Toda of the Nilgiri hills. The tribe is divided into two divisions: the Tarthar and the Teivali. Traditional government among the Toda is called the Naim. It consists of five members. Of these, three are elected from the Tarthar division, one from the Teivali division, and one from the Badaga tribe. The Badaga member participates in the hearing of only those cases where the dispute is related to two tribes. The council does not hear criminal cases but exercises its power in civil disputes between clans, families, and individuals. It plays a vital role in regulating ceremonials.

Besides this council, there is a Toda revenue character, introduced by the British, known as Monegar. He is mainly concerned with payment of the revenue assessment to the government.

Among the Badaga, another tribe found in the Nilgiri hills, the Monegar acts as the head of the village. The post is more or less hereditary. All disputes are settled by him. In complicated cases he takes help from other people of the village. In this tribe "each exogamous sect has its headman, called Gouda, who is

assisted by Parpattikaran, and decides tribal matters such as disputes, divorce, etc." (Thurston, 1909 : 80).

The Kadar are a food-gathering tribe of southern India and are concentrated in the Nelliampathi and the Kadacheri mountains located in the Cochin district of Kerala. Each Kadar village has a hereditary headman know as Muppan. "The succession to this office was controlled by customary law which assigned this position always to sister's son" (Bhowmik, 1971 : 125).

TRIBES OF WESTERN INDIA

The Dubla of Gujarat and the Bhil of Ratanmal are the only two tribes in this region on which material is available.

The Dubla, distributed unevenly in south Gujarat, have three different kinds of panchayats : the statutory village panchayat, the tribal panchayat, and a higher organization comprising a number of villages. The village panchayat takes up problems which affect the entire village, while the Dubla Punch (tribal panchayat) attends to intra-tribal problems. Decisions are taken after an opportunity is given to both the contending parties to explain their side of the case. A Dubla headman, also called Patel, is selected from the elders living in a village. The factors which influence the selection are age, experience, status, and influence.

The Bhil of Ratanmal live along the eastern border of Gujarat (Nath, 1960). They are scattered over a wide territory and the Bhil villages are dispersed. An average Bhil village in this area consists of one or more lineages of the same or different clans. Authority in the village is mostly concentrated in the dominant lineages. It is exercised through a headman known as Tadavi, who is also the chief of the village council. He is assisted by one or two other functionaries, who are normally selected from amongst his kinsmen only. The headman represents the village in all inter-village affairs. Normally, the son succeeds the father to the position of Tadavi, but it is not necessary. Any person of the dominant lineage, in theory, is entitled to be elected.

COMMENT

On the basis of the political history of the tribes, three distinct phases can be identified in tribal India: the pre-British period,

the British period, and the post-independence period.

Although contacts between the tribes and non-tribal groups date back to the early period of Indian history, it was only during the British period that the interaction between the two was intensified. Besides weekly markets, where these people came in contact with one another, the tribes had regular interaction with some artisan castes like blacksmiths, basket-makers, potters, and weavers. The early impact of non-tribals on tribals can easily be found in the economic organization of these people. Later on, the social and cultural aspects of tribal life were also influenced.

As far as changes in the political organization of the tribes are concerned, a review of the existing literature reveals that no full-length study on the political organization of any of the tribes in India has been done and "what is available is in the form of stray articles with haphazardly collected illustrations" (Shah, 1971: 7).

On the basis of traditional political organization found in tribal India, we can classify the tribes into the following categories:

1) Tribes which have a village council or traditional panchayats only.

2) Tribes which have a two-tier system of organization—one at the village level and the other at the inter-village level.

3) Tribes with a three-tier system of organization—one at the village level, the other at the tribal level, and the third at the inter-village level. This is found among the tribes living alongside non-tribals, like the Kond of Orissa. There are some tribes which do not have any centralized system.

On the basis of the scanty information available, the following observations about the political organization of the tribes can be made:

1) In almost all tribes, the traditional authority structure is still dominant. The introduction of new systems of government and authority has reduced the powers of traditional chiefs, but they continue to be influential.

2) The introduction of new systems has led, in some cases, to confusing situations. This happened because most tribals were unable to grasp the idiom and structure of the new systems.

3) Formerly, the decisions used to be taken either by the head or by consensus. But the introduction of the new systems has tended to replace consensus by majority decisions.

4) In some tribes there is no clear-cut distinction between secular and sacred institutions. The head of a traditional panchayat also acts as the chief for religious activities.

5) The new emerging leadership is definitely different from the traditional leadership.

Sachchidanand and Vidyarthi, in their studies of the tribes of Bihar, tried to find out the changes in the leadership pattern. Vidyarthi came to the conclusion that the leadership pattern is changing from the "rural-bred, charismatic and tradition oriented leadership" to the "western educated, urban-bred" who were "rational in interpreting and tackling a political situation." Sachchidanand and Sen concluded that if the leader is effective and the first to adopt the new pattern, others invariably follow him.

We lack reliable information on the actual working of the statutory panchayats introduced by state governments among the tribals. We also have no information about the participation of local people in electing these members. It would be good if studies are undertaken in different areas among different tribes to discover the patterns. It would also be useful to "re-study" some of the important tribes, with an emphasis on the changes in the political structure of these tribes. The role of mass media and education on the changing political structure have also to be studied.

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